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Irish  
Historical Allusions

Curious Customs  
and  
Superstitions

County of Kerry  
CORKAGUINY

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by

Patrick Foley

1916



# Irish Historical Allusions

Curious Customs  
and  
Superstitions

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County of Kerry

CORKAGUINY

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by

Patrick Foley

1916

Printed in the United States

Published by the Author

*Erin you are still Gra-Mo-Chree.*

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of re-publication and translation  
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DEC -7 1916

no. 1.

To  
My Son

MICHAEL FOLEY

This book, the fourth of a  
series designated to present  
all essential historical information on this County is

Dedicated  
by his  
Affectionate Father,  
The Author.

## PREFACE.

While these manuscripts were in the hands of Messrs. Sealy, Bryer & Walker, Printers, Dublin, the late Irish rising took place. During the fight, between the British military and the Irish Republican forces, a portion of the City of Dublin was destroyed by fire and artillery, including the printers' premises, together with the author's manuscripts for these books, and other works. Fearing the destruction of liners, by German submarines, the author held copies of his works until landed in Ireland. Believing that there they were safe, the copies were neglected and portions of them burned and lost. Therefore in the following pages the author presents to the reader but the remaining two parts of a book left after the Dublin fire, to which is added a brief account of Sinn Feiners and the outbreak.

AUTHOR.

Dated at Oakland, California, this 3rd day of July, 1916.

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## INTRODUCTION.

ACCORDING to leading Irish historians, close on three thousand years ago, Ireland was fairly well peopled. Of the several tribes that settled in the country, the most important colony was the Milesians. Dr. Keating, the Irish historian, says that race of people landed in Ireland thirteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, while McGeoghegan put this event down for 1029 B. C., and O'Flaherty, one thousand years before the Christian Era.

At the time of the landing of the Milesians, Ireland was governed by three Dedaanan Kings, viz: MacCull, MacKecht and MacGrena, whose Queens were Eire, Fodla and Banba.

*The Milesians.*—There were many battles fought between invading Milesians and the older settlers. Probably the first notable battle ever fought in the country, was that which took place between the Tuatha-de-Danaans, who possessed Ireland for over two hundred years previously, and the invading Milesians. This battle is said to have taken place about one thousand years before the Christian Era, and was brought about by the following circumstances: The Milesians, having left Scythia, settled in Spain, where they lived for several generations. One of their chiefs, named Ith, having on one occasion sailed in the direction of Ireland, unexpectedly touched the country, where he landed, with the result that he was attacked and wounded. Although he was carried away alive in his ship, he died on sea, and his remains were conveyed to Spain. To avenge his death the sons of Milesius assembled a large force, and headed by their

mother, Queen Scots, eight of them with a fleet of thirty ships, landed in Ireland.

Having marched into the country and demanded battle or submission, the De-Danaans complained that they were taken by surprise and treated unfairly, and if the invaders re-embarked and retired from the shore, and if the Milesians were then able to effect a landing, the country should be given to them. The very moment the Milesians were on the high sea, a great storm blew, which scattered and wrecked the fleet. Four of Queen Scots's sons perished on the coast of Kerry. When the storm ceased, Queen Scots and her two sons made good a landing in Tralee Bay, which in olden times was called "Lough-Foirdream-huin," and marched inland to Slieve-Mish. Here Queen Scots met a part of the De-Danaan army, led by one of the De-Danaan Queens, called Eire, with the result that a great battle was fought on the mountain of Slieve-Mish, in the County of Kerry, in which the Milesians were victorious, but the Queen fell.

After this victory the Milesian army marched towards Tara, where they defeated and killed the three De-Danaan Kings, MacCull, MacKecht and MacGrena. The Milesians then took possession of the country, which they divided between them, and gave a long line of kings to Ireland, many of whom fell in battle and few died a natural death.

The Milesian kings, princes and chiefs ruled the country for over 2,140 years. Roderick O'Connor was the last High King of the Milesian race to rule the whole of Ireland. He reigned in 1168 A. D. The largest percentage of the Irish are descendants of the Milesians.

Christianity was established by St. Patrick, and judging by the way he handled the Pagan Irish kings and chiefs, he must have been a wise statesman.

From 432 to 812, Ireland was known throughout the world as the "Island of Saints and Scholars." Foreigners came from all parts of the Old World for education. The ancient language of the country then, as now, was Irish. In the Irish wars most of the fine Irish arts and buildings were destroyed by foreign invaders. Probably the "Book of Kells" is the finest production of its age in the whole world.

Latin was the written language of England in the 12th Century, or thereabouts

*The Danes in Ireland.*—About the year 795, Danish and Norwegian pirates appeared in ships upon the Irish coast. Here and there they sailed into harbors, landed, ran into the country, robbed the people, ravaged women, tossed children from lance to lance for pleasure, drank the blood of their victims, imitated the dogs in their wild ferocity, set houses on fire and successfully returned to their ships before their very presence in the locality became generally known. Year after year they increased in numbers. In the summer they came like swarms of flies. They robbed monasteries, tore up fine Irish arts, took ornaments off books and killed the monks. After some time parties of them settled on the seaboard. Their chief towns in Kerry were Ballinagaul, Ballylangford and Broadford. For two hundred and twenty years they held their criminal sway of rape, murder and robbery over the inhabitants of the seaboard of Ireland. In several engagements they were defeated and driven from Ireland by the Irish kings, chiefs and princes. However,

in 1074, at the invitation of the Prince or King of Hinster, they attempted to conquer Ireland. On Good Friday, the 23rd of April, 1074, the Danes and their followers were completely defeated in battle at Glantarf, County Dublin, by the Irish, under Brien Borue, King of Munster. This day the Danish power in the whole of Europe was broken down, and their piratical expeditions ended. The same day Brien Borue fell while praying in his tent.

*English Invasion.*—Fighting between petty Irish chieftains became common. Following the example set by the Danes, the rule of might, not right, was very much practiced. Just as the people were settling down in peace, the Prince of Linster induced the wife of another Irish prince or governor to elope with him. Ireland was now divided. There were circumstances in the case which in the opinion of many did not justify the marriage of the Princess to O'Rourke. The High King of Ireland and the Irish could not stand the disgrace of such an act to occur on Irish soil, and consequently declared war on the Prince of Linster. The Prince of Linster appealed to King Henry II of England for aid. The kings, princes and people of Ireland stood for virtue, while the English king and his barons under the color and pretense of restoring virtue to Ireland, stood for a licentious old man and introduced rape, plunder and murder into the country.

In 1170, Richard Clare, commonly called the Earl of Strongbow, on behalf of the King of England, landed in Ireland. In 1171 the King of England in person visited Ireland. He produced the Pope's Bull, showing that he had authority from Rome to establish virtue, settle and possess Ireland. The majority of

the Irish chieftains refused to recognize the King of England, no matter from whom he pretended to possess the authority.

These are the circumstances which brought about the first Norman English raids on the peaceful valleys of Ireland. Little by little the English succeeded in establishing a foothold on Irish soil. It took the English over four hundred years to completely conquer the whole island. After some time the English in Ireland became more Irish than the Irish themselves, but they had to get the "fat" of the land; they even appointed their own clergy, although both at the time were Roman Catholics.

*The Protestant Reformation.*—The most of the districts in Ireland were governed by their own independent native chieftains, although they were supposed to be under English rule. When the Protestant reformation burst forth, King Henry VIII of England hunted Luther and other Protestant reformers out of England. The Pope conferred upon him the title of "King Defender of the Faith."

This King Henry married his deceased brother's wife before the marriage of the latter was fully consummated. It is a settled doctrine of the Catholic Church that when both parties to a marriage enter into it of their own free will and accord, and that no moral objection is standing in the way of the ceremony, upon the consummation of marriage no priest nor power on earth can divorce and religiously remarry any of the parties while they both live.\* Henry VIII knew this. After being for twenty years married, he

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\*A marriage ceremony does not in itself wholly complete a marriage in the Catholic Church. (See the Catholic Encyclopedia.)

pretended to feel frightfully uneasy because "it was wrong for him to marry his brother's wife" after the brother's death. He applied for a divorce to the Pope, and the Pope refused to grant him a divorce. He at once established his own ecclesiastical courts, declared himself head of the Church, and his courts at once granted him a divorce from his lawful wife. Immediately he married one Anne Boleyn, whom he divorced and killed for another wife. In all he had six wives, one of whom he caused to be ripped open on child's birth. He seized and confiscated the churches, chapels and all religious houses in England and converted them to his own use. Of course these acts were resisted with bloodshed.

The foundation on which the Protestant Reformation was founded in England, was born in lust, murder and plunder. The British sovereign declared himself supreme head of the Church on earth, and substituted the parson for the priest. Henry VIII attempted to introduce his new-made religion into Ireland. This religion was not Catholic nor was it Protestant. Ireland rejected it and Henry VIII was not able to enforce his orders there.

In the year 1553, Edward VI died, and Queen Mary, daughter of Henry and of Catherine of Aragon, became Queen of England. This Queen was a staunch Roman Catholic. Maddened at the ill-treatment of her mother at the hands of Henry VIII, his ministers, the ecclesiastical courts and reformers, she restored the Catholic religion, recovered Catholic churches, monasteries and like property, and tortured and burned Protestant leaders, especially those who refused to deliver up the property. By Protestant historians she



is styled "Bloody Mary." As Ireland was always Catholic, her reign there did not cause much disturbance.

*Queen Elizabeth.*—After her came Queen Elizabeth, called the "Virgin Queen" by Protestants, because she never married. However, she was the reverse of a virgin. She declared herself a Catholic, but when the Pope was notified that she ascended the throne by hereditary rights and the will of the people, it appears he made use of some language to the effect that he did not see how she could claim the Crown of England by hereditary rights, as she was the daughter of Henry VIII with Anne Boleyn while his first wife was alive. Queen Elizabeth, fearing the influence of Rome might deprive her of the crown, at once declared herself a Protestant.

During her long reign, Catholic Ireland became her greatest slaughter field. Although in the Protestant Bible she is said to be the "bright occidental star," "of most happy memory," the truth is that she did not care much for any religion, but used Protestantism as the most favorable one to gain her ends. Bad as "Bloody Mary" was, her reign was a mild one when compared with "virgin" Elizabeth. England became worse in those days than Mexico of today. The instruments of torture in the Tower of London bear silent evidence of many dark crimes.

*Charles I Beheaded.*—After this hateful Queen dying, James I, son of Mary, Queen of the Scots, came upon the throne. He was followed by King Charles I, whom over a question of a little tax, Cromwell beheaded and established the Commonwealth. Cromwell did not confine his butchery to England; he

landed in Ireland, took Drogheda, killed women and children and put the priests to the sword; he caused both the real and personal estate of the people to be seized and had the lands parcelled up amongst his officers or "gamesters." These, together with some of Queen Elizabeth's followers, became Irish landlords and tyrants of the worst kind. The people who reclaimed, tilled, improved and erected buildings on those lands, could not understand how a foreigner who never tilled or improved one inch of land could claim ownership of everything which the farmer raised. For two hundred and fifty years, war has gone on between the landlords and the tillers of the soil. Today the descendants of ancient occupiers of the holdings are repossessing same and Cromwell landlords are disappearing.

*Cromwell.*—When Cromwell died, England did not become a Republic, and again a king in the person of Charles II ascended the throne.

*King James II and the Battle of the Boyne.*—The next most important event in Irish history is the Battle of the Boyne—the disgraceful boast of some Englishmen—fought in Ireland between King James II of England, a Catholic, of the Stuart family, and his son-in-law, William of Orange from Holland. In America this war is called a religious war, fought between Catholics and Protestants. It is true that because this king declared himself openly a Roman Catholic, Protestants in wrongful occupation of Catholic property became intensely alarmed for their future, and invited William, Prince of Orange, to invade England.

King James was one of the greatest cowards that ever lived. With his English troops he lost almost every engagement in England. He then fell back on Ireland. William, Prince of Orange, on landing in Carrick-a-fergus, Ireland, on the 14th day of June, 1690, found himself at the head of about 40,000 men. The Irish had no love for any British king. However, priests and Catholic leaders influenced the Irish to come to aid King James, on the pretense that his own daughter and her Protestant husband, a foreigner, were depriving this old man of his kingdom because he was a Catholic. The Irish, blinded with sympathy, entered the fight. On the 1st of July, 1690, the Battle of the Boyne was fought. William in person led his own army while King James stood at a distance, ready to mount his horse and ride away if the battle should be favorable to the Prince of Orange. The Irish fought bravely for over half the day, but as they began to retreat in good order, the English King mounted his horse and rode away into Dublin, leaving the Irish fighting behind him. He was designated "Dirty James" by the Irish.

The Irish, although deserted by the King and others, continued the fight for over one year from the River Boyne to the walls of Limerick and Athlone. On the 3rd of October, 1691, the generals of both armies signed the famous treaty of Limerick. According to the articles signed, full religious liberties were granted to the Roman Catholics, but no sooner did the Irish soldiers sail away to France, than England wilfully and wickedly broke the treaty. England has never yet kept a treaty with the Irish, if it stood in the way of plunder or gain.

*Treaty of Limerick Broken.*—In 1692, contrary to the articles of the treaty of Limerick, the Catholics were excluded from the Irish Parliament. Education of a Catholic child, shortly afterwards, was declared to be a serious crime. Catholics were required to take an oath declaring the mass damnable. No Catholic could learn a trade.

In 1701, contrary to the treaty of Limerick, Catholic solicitors were disqualified. Priests found in Ireland were branded with red-hot irons on the cheeks. The law made it death to shelter, and penal servitude to know where a priest was concealed and not to inform the government. Priests were dragged from the altars, branded, disemboweled, quartered, hanged and transported. A Catholic could not have a horse worth more than five pounds (twenty-five dollars). Any Protestant tendering a Roman Catholic five pounds for his horse, the horse would have to go.

*Flight of Wild Geese.*—The young Irishmen of that period rushed to France and were called “Wild Geese.” Catholics could not send their children to be educated at home or abroad, and Catholic doctors were not allowed.

*The Irish Brigade at Fontenoy, France.*—At Fontenoy, France, on Tuesday, the 11th of May, 1745, the Irish Brigade in battle swept before them the British and their flag. The war cry was “Revenge! Remember Limerick!! Dash down the Sassenach!!!” From that day onward Irish priests and Irish Catholics could move about without the danger of being hanged or transported. At Fontenoy the Irish exiles made the British ministry conscious of the harsh and unjust manner in which they had treated the Irish Catholics,

and gradually the penal laws were forced to disappear.

*American Revolution.*—In 1775, Irishmen were found very active in the cause of the American Revolution. Shortly after, England granted Ireland an independent Parliament. This Parliament is known as “Grattan’s Parliament.” The progress of Ireland under her own Parliament surprised the world and immediately England set about for its destruction. In 1801, Ireland was again a bleeding nation—her Parliament was gone. Although an Irish Catholic could not sit in Irish Parliament, yet the people expected Catholic emancipation from it much sooner than from the British Parliament.

*Tithes and Orangemen.*—During all this time Roman Catholics resisted the payment of tithes to the parson. The parson was a minister of the Protestant church, who was substituted for the priest and never ministered to a Roman Catholic. Catholics were compelled by law to give one-tenth of their crops to the support of the Protestant Church without receiving anything in return but insult and injury. Then came the landlord, giving nothing but claiming everything to the body and souls of the tenants. Up until the land agitation the buildings and all improvements made or erected by the tenant became the property of the landlord. In order to keep Ireland divided, the wealth and power of the Unionist (capitalist) class from England to New Zealand is still lavished on a body of foreigners in the North of Ireland, called “Orangemen.”

*Orangemen.*—It must be remembered that it is not the Orangemen alone the Irish have to contend with

in their fight for Home Rule, but the whole power and wealth of the Unionist Party in England, Scotland, Ireland, India, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. The English under the color and pretense of peacemakers and Christians are always doing the utmost in their power to sow the seeds of discord and dissension amongst the Irish people. One of the sharpest wedges they can drive to divide the people is religion. If the English Unionists believed that by granting Home Rule they could set Irishmen fighting, a full measure would be granted in eight hours.

*Irish Patriots.*—Amongst the Irish patriots the following Protestants took a leading part for Irish freedom, namely, Charles Stewart Parnell, Sir Isaac Butt, Henry Grattan and Robert Emmett. Their names, with many others, Ireland will hold in grateful remembrance.

Every blade of grass that grows on Irish soil is consecrated by the blood of Irishmen, women and children, shed in the cause of freedom. England, in her efforts to destroy the Irish language, the Catholic religion and the nationality of the country, tried the rack, gibbet, pitch-cap, quartering, coercion, famines, bribery and every barbarous and refined form of cruelty, without success. The war between Sax and Celt will rage hot and fierce until the last vestige of English misrule is swept from the green hills of Érin.

*Taxation and Refunds.*—By the Unionist Parliament, whiskey was taxed much heavier than beer. Few Irishmen drink beer, but many of them drink whiskey, while nearly every man and woman in England likes to have beer. After a careful study of Irish customs, every taxable article desired by the Irish was

especially aimed at. To make the tax appear just, the sum for the same quantity was raised alike all over the United Kingdom. By such plans and others of the like, Ireland was robbed of over \$28,000,000 a year, outside of her proper proportion, not to mention the millions the landlords or other office pets took out of the country. Money raised in Ireland went into the British treasury. Recently the England Parliament would make a grant of a few million pounds to Ireland for some purpose, the largest portion of which would go to some English pets holding offices of some kind in Ireland. Then a cry would be raised of "millions of English money granted by a generous government to Ireland." The truth is that in such grants the Irish people only received back a small portion of their own money.

*Author's Most Earnest Desire Is to See Ireland Free.*—The author's most earnest desire is to see the morning dawn when Protestant and Catholic in Ireland would be linked together in one bond of peace, enjoying the blessings of good laws made by a free people in an Irish Independent Parliament. He is opposed to a class or creed ascendancy, the adoring of human false gods, or the keeping of the whole island in slavery by a few non-productive, pampered gamesters.

GOD SAVE IRELAND!

P. M. FOLEY, Author.



*Abduction.*—Forceable abduction for a time was common enough in those parts. The most common source from which those abductions sprung was a man, after courting a girl for some time and finding her for him inclined, but the parents refusing to consent to their marriage, would come, accompanied by a dozen or more persons with saddle horses, drag the girl screaming out of bed, place her on horseback, gallop off to his hiding place—sometimes to his own house, but at other times to a friend's house—and there keep her until married.

When it happened that a Catholic boy and a Protestant girl were in deep love with each other, and the feminine members of the Protestant family would wish for their marriage, but after sounding the feelings of the girl's father and finding that he was steadfastly opposed to allow a Roman Catholic to be connected with his family, the hint would be thrown out to the boy that the only way he could possess his sweetheart now was by kidnaping. A hint so broadly given was quickly acted on. In a short time abuses set in, and instead of honest courtship, persons made for girls inheriting large fortunes.

Next came our "Squireens," or country gentlemen. These were made up chiefly of that class of landlords called middlemen, and persons holding some petty offices. The majority of them were corrupt, low and immoral, but still had the presumption to insist that others look up towards them as gentlemen. For cock-fighting, fox-hunting, or race-meeting, they would dress themselves up in great brilliancy and make such a display that they appeared just as remarkable as the



rancheros or caballeros of Old Mexico, whom, I understand, are their nearest comparison, and would have been their fittest companions.

A young man of that class, having his proposal of marriage with a young lady of fortune rejected, would become an abductor, and with the aid of firearms and a faction would carry her off and force a marriage upon her. To remove the reputation of a scandal, the clergy of both churches willingly performed the marriage ceremony, and often without any fee from the parties at the time. The strangest part of the transaction was that both Protestant and Catholic churches allowed forced marriages to stand as valid. Once the example was set by those high-class parish gentlemen it was adopted by their understrappers and, like a contagious disease, it reached the common people, with the result that in the seventeenth century abductions of pretty girls with fortunes and good names became for a time numerous.

*Bally-Ferriter Evictions.*—These were evictions which the Sheriff of Kerry was never able to carry out. On portions of the estates of the Earl of Cork, near Bally-Ferriter, several tenants were to be ejected. On the 16th of February, 1887, the Sheriff with a staff of Bailiffs, protected by a large force of police armed with rifles, bayonets, revolvers and battons, under the command of District Inspector Gray, started from Dingle, towards Bally-Ferriter. Upon reaching a place called Shannacnock, two thousand people assembled. They were armed with pitchforks, scythes and sticks. They forced the Sheriff, his assistants and escort hastily to return to Dingle. Several at-

tempts to carry out these evictions failed. A settlement was arrived at through the Rev. Father Egan, P. P., of Bally-Ferriter, whereby the evictions were abandoned.

(See P. 281, History Co. Kerry-Corkaguiny.)

*Barking Disease* prevailed about the year 1341. It appears persons of both sex went about the country barking like dogs. This disease was pretty bad and visited those parts.

*Battle of the Boyne.*—This battle was fought on the 1st of July, 1690, at the River Boyne, in Ireland, between the soldiers of King James, the lawful King of England, and his son-in-law, William, Prince of Orange, a foreigner from Holland.

Protestants of England, who held Catholic confiscated lands, feared King James, and invited William into England. In England, James offered very poor resistance; in Ireland it was different. Although the Irish had never much love for any English King, yet the leaders and clergy worked upon the sympathies of the people by pointing out the wrong of the King's Protestant daughter to be depriving her father of his lawful throne, his home and country. Blinded by sympathy, the Irish were induced to fight. By his own fault James had but six guns, while William had fifty. William's army was only 25,000 men against 50,000 in James' army.

The Irish fought well, but several times showed signs of yielding in the afternoon. King James

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\*The anniversaries of the Battles of the Boyne and Aughrim are celebrated on the 1st and 12th of July in Belfast, by Orangemen wrecking Catholic churches and assaulting women and old people.

mounted his horse and deserted his Irish troops. The Irish nicknamed him "Dirty James."

This battle was lost but the Irish continued the fight, although the King was off for France.

On the 12th of July, 1691, another decisive battle was fought at Aughrim, in which the soldiers of the Prince of Orange were victorious. However, the fight was continued in Limerick and Atholone. On the 24th of September, a truce of four days was agreed upon. The 3rd of October, 1691, the Generals of the English and Irish armies signed the famous Treaty of Limerick. The Irish soldiers sailed away to France. In 1692 the English broke the treaty.

*Battle of Glantarf.*—On Good Friday, the 23rd of April, the final battle was fought between the Danes and Brien Borue\* at Glantarf, Dublin. Before the battle started Brien Borue rode on his horse amongst his troops; holding a crucifix in his hand he addressed his army. This was a hand-to-hand fight. From the time the tide was high-water until a long time after it was low-water the result was doubtful. Before evening the Danes gave way all around. Victory crowned Brien and his Munster men. The losses were: Irish, over 4,000, and Danes, over 7,000

However, Brien Borue was assassinated while praying in his tent.

This battle released the whole of Europe from the Danish power.

*Black Death.*—This dangerous contagious disease made its way into Ireland about the year 1348. It was

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\*Brien-Borue: Borue was only a nickname given to Brien. His father's name was Kennedy. Brien Borue and his father were of the family of Cormac.

so dangerous that any person who touched the sick or even looked for a few seconds into his face was immediately affected and died. It swept the English out of Ireland. According to the English accounts, it touched but few of the native Irish.

*Black Famine.*—This was called to the famine years of 1845, 1846 and 1847. During these years for the want of food people died by thousands from hunger. From November, 1846, until the end of the spring of 1847, people were falling dead like Autumn leaves in a storm, by the roadside, in their cabins, and in the fields. For burial their corpses were conveyed to the graveyard in sheets and buried without coffins. Dogs in search of food tore into the tombs and preyed upon the emaciated corpses of the famine victims.

This famine was caused by a failure of the potato crop, on which the common people lived for sustenance. The blackest feature of this famine was that the Irish branch of the Church of England availed of it to seduce the starving people into Protestantism with soup and bibles, and that these years there was enough corn shipped out of Ireland to maintain the class ascendancy in luxury, that would feed as many as died through hunger.

(See P. 212-232, Hist Co. Kerry.)

*Blood Money.*—This is money paid by the government to spies, informers and crown witnesses, to induce them to swear against persons charged with murder, or serious crime. It was much used during the Irish agitation. By the Crimes (Coercion) Act of 1882, it was proposed to levy a "Blood Tax" for murder on the innocent rate-payers.

At present, compensation to police injured in certain cases in the execution of their duties and malicious injury to property is charged against the rate-payers.

*Boycotting*.—This word was derived from Captain Boycott, a land agent who was boycotted. Today it is to be found in every dictionary in the English language. Its use and effect in our district is fully set forth by me in my "His. Co. Kerry"—Corkaguiny, and also under The Reading of Chronology.

*Brehons*.—Were the names given to ancient Irish judges, who administered the Irish ancient laws with strict justice and impartiality. In 1365 or thereabouts, the English by the Statute of Kilkenny, forbade the English subjects to obey it. However, for its justice it was respected and obeyed until after Cromwell's wars in Ireland.

*Brigid's (Saint) Day*.—This falls on the 1st of February of each year, and formerly was observed as a holy day in honor of the death of St. Brigid, she being the founder of the famous nunnery of Kildare and the patroness of Ireland. In those parts a pretty ancient custom of carrying a *Brideoge* on St. Brigid's Day, and receiving gifts in her name, still survives, although in a dying form. In country homes eggs were usually given to those accompanying or carrying *Brideoge*. However, if any of those receiving these gifts were seen drinking intoxicating liquors with the proceeds of St. Brigid's Day, it would be made sufficiently clear to some member of the party that thereafter their visits were undesirable, and the next time they came around they were to go empty-handed.

St. Brigid was born about the year 452 at a place

called Fogherth, near Dundalk. She founded her convent under or near an oak tree, from which the town and county of Kildare took their present name.

She was the mother and foundress of many others and was known as the "Wonderful Worker" throughout Ireland. On the 1st of February, 525, she died and was buried at Kildare. Her nuns honored her memory so much that they kept a fire continually burning both day and night which was not extinguished until 1220, when the Archbishop of Dublin ordered it to be put out, as it was fast becoming the object of superstition.

Owing to the Scandinavian raids upon Ireland, in which they tore down churches and monasteries, her body was taken from Kildare and transferred to Down Patrick. In 1185 a triple vault was discovered containing the bodies of St. Patrick, St. Brigid and St. Columba. On the 9th of June, 1186, or thereabouts, the Pope caused the relics of these three great saints to be placed in the Cathedral of Down. This cathedral with its contents was destroyed by order of King Henry VIII. of England, but pieces of the relics, including the head of St. Brigid, were saved by some clergy. The head was carried to Neustadt, in Austria. In 1587, Emperor Rudolf gave it to the Church of the Jesuits at Lisbon. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, her hand is preserved at Lumiar, near Lisbon, Portugal, and another relic is at St. Martin's, Cologne.

*Cat Brack*.—This was the name given to printed matter found in Irish primers supplied by the Irish Protestant Society to Irish-speaking Roman Catholics in those parts, because the former, under the color and

pretense of preserving the Irish language, both oral and written, instead taught the Protestant version of the Scriptures and thereby attempted to overthrow the Roman Catholic religion. This campaign started out very active in 1836 and lingered on to the last days of the last century. While the scholars were learning both teachers and pupils were in receipt of pay. Some teachers made it a practice to enter the names of Roman Catholics on their roll books who were not students, but as a friendly neighbor would accommodate the teacher so as to enable him to get his fees.

*Catholic Rent.*—This was a tax levied in 1823 upon Catholics by Daniel O'Connell's Catholic Association to support the fight for emancipation.

*Charity Meal.*—At the end of 1879, a famine threatened Ireland. The British Government at first refused to take any steps to prevent death from hunger. The Land League, which was founded by the later Michael Davitt, in April, 1879, by Parnell, was temporarily converted into a relief organization. In America, Parnell and John Dillion collected \$250,000 for the relief of distress.\* The Duchess of Marlborough also appealed for help. In January and February, large contributions arrived from Canada, Australia, India, and the United States. The funds were distributed amongst the clergy of the poorer parishes, who issued tickets to traders to supply poor people with Indian meal.

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\*In America, Parnell was offered twenty-five dollars, five thereof to buy bread and twenty to buy lead, i. e., for the Land League. It was accepted.



*Cholera Plague.*—On the 14th of March of 1831 this great plague made its first appearance in Belfast, Ireland. It visited our part of the country shortly after. When it was first discovered in the town, the inhabitants fled to the country. It was nearly as fatal as the Black Death. It also followed the famine years of Black Death

*Clanna-Gael.*—Clanna-Gael is an Irish society formed in America in 1881, or thereabouts. It was made up of most loyal members of the old Fenians, who hated to their dying day British rule in Ireland, and at the first opportunity available are determined to overthrow British power in Ireland.

*Cloghane Pattern Day.*—This pattern is held on the last Sunday of July in each year. The old people of the parish believe that it originated in honor of a pagan chieftain called Crom Duff, signifying *Crom of the Heap of Stones*, one of the deities of the Irish Druids. The last Sunday in Summer is called Black Crom, being held sacred to St. Patrick as the anniversary of commemorating the destruction of this class of idols as well as others of a like nature.

Cromleacs, composed of huge stones, the selection of ancient Druids, are to be found in the Parish of Ballyduff, and other like evidence in the neighborhood which go to show that the district was the scene of ancient ceremonies. Tradition gives credit to a pagan chieftain for building the old church, the remains of which stand at the east end of the dismantled Protestant church in Cloghane burial ground. However, the present structure was not erected for many centuries after paganism was overthrown. It is probable that



the first Christian building in Cloghane was erected by a pagan chieftain, the follower of the Crom Duff form of worship. After mass, dancing and other like innocent amusements are carried on here. Excessive drinking and rowdyism, I am very glad to note, is very very much on the decline; in fact, is gone out of existence there.

*Cockfighting.*—These games were common in those parts until suppressed by law.

*Corkaguiny Magistrates Disliked Attorneys and Decided Cases According to Dingle Justice.*—From 1720 downward to 1822 the Corkaguiny justices of the peace would not allow any attorney-at-law to plead before them, but instead of deciding cases according to law settled them in conformity with “Dingle justice.” Whenever an attorney was brought at high expense from Tralee to appear before them, the cases in which he was engaged were adjourned from court to court and his client in the end defeated.

Lady Chattam in her visit to Dingle noticed that cases were not decided in keeping with “the law,” but according “to justice.” She did not know that the houses of the Dingle magistrates were filled with smuggled goods, and that they reaped a rich harvest from several just but illegal trades. Therefore they sat more often for the protection of the smugglers than the enforcement of the law. (See “His. Co. Kerry”—Corkaguiny.)

*Cromwell.*—Oliver Cromwell rebelled against King Charles I, beheaded the latter, and set up a Republic. In 1649, Cromwell landed in Dublin, took Drogheda,

and put the priests and women to sword. Pierce Ferriter held Kerry against the English for ten years. Ferriter was the last Catholic chieftain to hold out against Cromwell's forces. In direct violation of the English pledges, Ferriter was hanged at Killarney in 1653, together with Father T. Moriarty.

*Crowbar Brigade.*—This was applied to the Sheriff and landlords' bailiffs because, armed with crowbars and protected by police, they forced an entry into the houses of those to be ejected and demolished the homes of the evicted tenants. They also often carried a battering ram, i. e., timber bound with irons, hoist on poles, and swung against the sides of the buildings.

*Doon-an-Ore and Olean-an-Ore.*—These were the names given by the country people hereabouts to a rock in Smerwick Harbour on seeing it covered with brass cannon, the flags of Spain and the Pope's consecrated banner sparkling in the sun. Foreigners also had the reputation of bringing a large quantity of gold with them. (See "Hist. Co. Kerry"—Corkaguiny.)

*English Garrison.*—The Irish landlords are so called by public speakers because as Cromwell's soldiers they possessed themselves of all the Irish lands, and since then the British Government by military force has maintained them in this country, where they became a crushing burden on the people.

*Enlisting Young Men by Slipping a Shilling Into Their Hands.*—The custom of recruiting sergeants going around the country and slipping a shilling in the Queen's name into a young man's hand, then forcing him into the army, has been stopped. In Dingle peninsula the recruiting sergeant very often

secured crippled tailors of good appearance, who on purpose would sit in the darkest room in a public house likely to be visited by the sergeant, keeping their feet under a drinking table and their crutches hidden, with a half-gallon of porter before them. The recruiting sergeant, looking into the faces of fine, strong-looking, muscular men, would force a drink upon them and ask them to enlist. At first they would take the drink, but would pretend to be hesitating very much about taking the shilling which the recruiting sergeant would have spinning on the table before them. After a good deal of sham pretensions of being unable to fight and unwilling to do so, each of them would slowly accept the shilling, spend it at once, swallow the free drinks and eat Queen's dinner and, when fed like game cocks, would ask one of their companions to look for their crutches for them so they could accompany the sergeant and enlist in the army. When the sergeant would discover his mistake the trouble started to get back the shilling, but as they made it a point not to have more than one penny in their possession he was compelled to leave without recruits or money.

*Excommunication with Bell, Book and Candle.*—During the Souper Campaign persons were excommunicated in Dingle, Ventry and Castle Gregory Chapels. After the priest had read the sentence, the bell was rung, the book closed and the candles extinguished. That moment the person excommunicated was excluded from the sacraments.

*Faction Fights.*—The fairs of Ballinclare were noted for their faction fights. The way these fights usually were started was a hero follower of the Fitz-

geralds, primed with drink, would prance through the fair, waving his blackthorn cudgel and at the same time shouting for a Moriarity. Of course, he would not go very long until he would be met by a gang of the followers of the Moriarity's. Then a fight was started in which whole parishes became involved. They fought each other without any individual ill-will, using stumps of furze, sticks of hawthorn or oak as their weapons. Sometimes big fights were started by a man holding out a stick and having one member of a faction spit on it and asking a man of the opponent's faction then to let him spit on. If he did, this was a challenge and the fight started. Tents were upset and the people scattered leaving the fair grounds to the combatants.

The origin of these factional fights in those parts was the betrayal of the Earl of Desmond,—a Fitzgerald—by a Moriarity. However, in the course of time they branched into minor factions. There, too, was a class of idle half-gentry, called middlemen, in the country who pretty often caused faction fights. They made it a practice to attend fox hunts, horse races, cock fights and country fairs. They were idle, extravagant drunkards having the pretensions of gentlemen, and by the common people were called master "D—R—fe," while in truth and in fact they were the very pest of society. Another mistaken notion entered their heads that to give drink was a first-class qualification to be a gentleman, consequently they gave it freely pretty often and therefore secured a following. An insult arising out of a fox hunt, a horse race, a cock fight, or even a common game of cards in which they were concerned often led to serious faction fights. These faction fights were disapproved of by

the honest worker ; they were denounced by the clergy and suppressed by the police.

*Fenianism*—(See Author's Note on page 64.)

*Forty-Shilling Freeholders*.—Persons (men) in occupation of very small holdings with an annual valuation of both buildings and land combined amounting to forty shillings or over, were entitled to vote at Parliamentary elections. Landlords who used their tenants as voting instruments encouraged the dividing of holdings into as many patches with a valuation of forty shillings as was possible so as to multiply votes. In villages like North Cahirdorgan, Kildurry, Cahirs, Culibeen, Smerwick, Ballybrack and others a surprisingly large number of votes were obtained by this means. Usually the small holders voted as their immediate lessors requested. They were deprived of their votes with the passing of Catholic emancipation and the valuation has increased to ten pounds. O'Connell was blamed for it, but he is credited with having said that he would not accept Catholic emancipation if he knew that by so doing the forty-shilling freeholders would have to be sacrificed. The general belief is that he was in full accord with it from the start, in order to check a too rapid growth in the population of the country.

*Gaudy Ribbon Crosses (St. Patrick's Day)*.—These of various colors were sold on our streets some thirty-five years ago and worn on children's arms on St. Patrick's Day, but are now wholly extinct. A green rosette with a harp is now worn in front on the left breast instead. (See "His. Co. Kerry," page 37.)

*George Wyndham's Land Purchase Act*.—This land act of 1903, introduced by George Wyndham, then

Chief Secretary for Ireland, was the first good "Broom" brought by the Government to sweep the landlords of Ireland out of existence.

*Glenbeigh Evictions.*—These took place in 1887, or thereabouts. At the suggestion of General Revvers Buller, who was then in Ireland, the agent had the tenants' houses destroyed by fire. Mr. Edward Harrington, M. P., and Mr. Sheehan, M. P., played a prominent part in opposing the carrying out of those evictions.

*Great Famine.*—This famine started in both Ireland and England in 1315, or thereabouts. Mothers were known to devour their own children, and children ate their dead parents. Parents stole the children of others to eat them. Starving women started dancing around open air fires, to attract children so as to kill and cook them. Dead bodies were taken from the graves to be used for food. In jails prisoners ate each other. This famine, and the pestilence that accompanied it coming and going, lasted about eighty-five years.

*Halley's Comet.*—On the 18th of May, 1910, the earth passed through the tail of Halley's comet. Its approach caused great fear and excitement in some places. It is very remarkable that great wars follow Halley's comet.

*Head Act.*—By this law if an Irishman was found going on a journey from one county to another without being accompanied by an Englishman, dressed in English apparel, and of name and fame, it was lawful to kill the Irishman and cut off his head. For every head cut off the murderer was to receive one penny reward. The slaughter was great. Incredible as this

might appear to the reader, it is too true. Deputy Earl of Desmond, representing British law in Ireland, was responsible for this Act

*Harrington and Esmond's Election.*—This Parliamentary election contest took place between Edward Harrington, Parnellite, outgoing M. P. for West Kerry, and Sir Thomas Gratton Esmond, anti-Parnellite. By the undue influence of the clergy, Sir Thomas Gratton was elected.

*Home Rule.*—On Thursday, the 19th day of May, 1870, this association sprung into existence in Dublin under the leadership of Isaac Butt, a Protestant Nationalist. Briefly stated, the principal object contemplated by the organization was to obtain for the Irish people power to make their own laws and manage their own local affairs by an Irish Parliament, and to be subject to the English Crown, like Canada, Southwest Africa and Australia. In the Irish Parliament there was not to be a class or creed ascendancy, but Protestants and Catholics were to be linked together in one bond in a free and independent Parliament. In 1871, Isaac Butt was elected a member of Parliament for Limerick without a contest. Many Protestants joined the Home Rule cause. In the North of Ireland there exists a class of foreign Irish better known throughout the world as "Orangemen." The English Unionist classes, under the false color and pretense of peacemakers and Christians, are doing the utmost in their power to sow the seeds of discord and dissension among the Irish people. One of the sharpest wedges they can drive to divide the people in Ireland is religion. They raised the cry that it was not "Home Rule" but "Rome Rule." The wealth of



the Unionist party, or capitalist classes, of England, Scotland, Ireland, India, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada is behind them, and this class of people are petted and pampered for keeping the Unionist party in power.

Home rule bills were often passed by the House of Commons as representing a substantial majority of the people of the United Kingdom but rejected by the House of Lords. However, it may be well to note that a fight to restore the Irish Parliament under the title of "Repeal of the Union" started in Ireland before the doors of the Houses of Parliament were closed.\*

*House-League.*—This league was introduced into those parts in 1886, through the Irish National League. The object of the House League was to check the owners of houses from charging exorbitant rents to the occupants. In Dingle, Castlegregory, and other places, the League fixed "fair rents" and compelled the owners to give clear receipts, on payment of the new rents. For various reasons, the House League was never popular. As intimidation was practiced by the House League upon the owners of houses, the law courts held the receipts given invalid, and the old rents were recovered.

*Influenza.*—This is one of the most contagious diseases known, and far more dangerous than most people believe. Its last serious appearance amongst the people was in 1889-90. Every time it started from China and traveled the world quicker than any other

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\*The Union came into force on the 1st of January, 1801. Ever since the fight to restore to Ireland her Parliament has gone on without intermission. The members of Grattan's Parliament were all Protestants yet the majority of Roman Catholics in Ireland prefer it to a union with England.



disease. A letter written by one person to another, although over three thousand miles apart, caused an outbreak of the disease. Those suffering from any other malady, especially consumptives, were swept away to their graves. It made many a fond mother cry. It was known to be in Ireland in 1836-37, 1847-48, 1889-90. It is said that influenza first appeared in the country in 1570.

*Invisible-Blood-Jobbers.*—These are false and corrupt political leaders who for blood-money, and in hopes of receiving positions with pay, power, and false honor, are seducing the young men of Ireland into that mad and insane war now raging in Europe.

*Ivy Day.*—The anniversary of Parnell's burial. Ivy is an evergreen, therefore it is worn on Sunday following the 6th of October to keep the memory of C. S. Parnell forever green in the hearts of his followers.

*Kennels and Hunting.*—Formerly hunting was very much carried on in the peninsula. Every Sunday during the hunting season the sides of our mountains and valleys resounded with the yells of packs of half-starved bagles kept by middlemen. With the disappearance of the latter class, the bagles also followed, save a few exceptions.

*Kerry Bonds.*—Persons who were unable to pay their tithes in full when demanded and overdue, gave a bond bearing interest. The system appears to be peculiar to the promontories of Kerry for some time, but finally became extinct. Many of these bonds were given for tithes illegally levied.

*Kerry Cows Know Sunday.*—This old saying is handed down to us as a relic of the wicked famine

which started in 1739, when living cattle were bled once a week and the blood boiled with milk, cabbage or grass to make a Sunday meal for the family. (See 1713.)

*Kerry Election.*—This election took place in February of 1872. It was the first great flame kindled between the Home Rule party and the landlord classes in the county. The landlords were so irritated by the speeches delivered by the Blennerhassett supporters that they were determined to make their power felt and destroy the Home Rule party. The candidate chosen by the Home Rule party was a Protestant gentleman named Ponsby Blennerhassett from Kells. James A. Dease, a Roman Catholic gentleman from West Meath, was selected by the family of the Earl of Kenmare for the landlords. Dr. Moriarty, a Roman Catholic bishop, did all in his power to elect the nominee of the Kenmare family. In face of terror and landlord's oppression, in open voting the Home Rule candidate was elected by the Roman Catholics of Kerry. Many patriotic priests took sides with Blennerhassett. This gentleman remained true to the Home Rule party, but the Home Rule party, led by Sir Isaac Butt, was considered too mild. (See my "History of County Kerry" for a full account of this election.)

*Kissing the Blarney Stone by the Silver Tongue of Kerry and Others.*—There is a saying among some people that Counselor Hussey of Farnakilla, known as the "Silver Tongue" of Kerry, kissed the Blarney stone in Blarney Castle, County Cork, and thereby secured his sweet, fluent, silver-tongued speech. He is not the only person hereabouts who is said to have

kissed the Blarney stone. Everyone from the South of Ireland who has secured a fluent or flattering speech is credited with visiting it. As some individuals will be found ignorant enough to ascribe such a virtue to the stone and tell others in foreign lands that it possesses such, I am going a little outside my province to remove it as far as possible. If you *were forever rubbing your tongue to the Blarney stone, you would find no virtue in it whereby your speech will be improved*, and I dare say Silver Tongue of Dingle never kissed the stone.

Thousands of legends and stories are woven about it, but these were written for amusement, and the circumstances connected with kissing the stone supplied good food for legends and diversion.

There is a castle called "Blarney Castle" about six miles on this (Kerry) side of the City of Cork, within the Village of Blarney in the County of Cork. This castle contains a stone bearing the following inscription:

CORMACH MCCARTHY  
*Fortis me Fieri Facit*  
A. D. 1446.

or the like. In 1602 an Irish chieftain named Cormach McDermod Carthy, who held the castle against the English, when hard pressed, concluded a truce with the Lord President, kissed the Blarney stone which his forefathers placed there, thereby leaving the Lord President and the English under the impression (without promising) that the castle would be surrendered as soon as McCarthy would reason with his followers and remove some of his belongings. The Lord President sent messengers to the English officers, gladly

informing them that he "got Blarney" from McCarthy without much trouble. McCarthy, who was only borrowing time and quietly strengthening his castle, then set about and with fair promises and false pretext day by day put off the Lord President until he was reinforced by the Spaniards. Even then the Lord President was firmly assuring his countrymen that he "got Blarney" for them.

However, when the English found that instead of the Lord President having Blarney Castle he had nothing but McCarthy's honey and flattering speeches and they then had a hard fight before them, the Lord President became the laughing stock of both English, Irish and Spaniards, who mockingly would say of him, "He got Blarney."

If you will ever visit Blarney for the purpose of kissing the Blarney stone, you may be prepared for all sorts of tricks. The more earnest you appear about kissing it, the more fables you will be told about it. If a man is too feeble looking to climb, those in the Village of Blarney will most likely point out another broken stone lying on the ground belonging to the castle, telling him that a drunken blackguard dug it out of its place for carrying it away to make money by improving people's speech, and left it fall down and it was smashed, and then it lost its virtue.

If you are young and active, they will point out to you another stone about one hundred feet from the ground and tell you you must go up to the top of the castle and be held by the heels and leave your head and body hang downwards outside the parapet wall of the castle. Of course, you will say that is impossi-

ble for you to do. Then you are told you must go home without improving your speech.

*Land League and Irish National League.*—On the 28th of April, 1879, the Land League was founded in Irishtown, West Mayo, by the late Michael Davitt. The object of this League was to abolish landlordism and make tenant farmers owners of their own holdings. Charles Stewart Parnell was placed at the head of this new organization, and on the 8th of June, Parnell and Davitt appeared at a monster meeting held at West Port. The Land League was suppressed by the Coercion Act, but the spirit was untouched. The name was changed to the Irish-National-League and Parnell chosen as its president. The Land League succeeded in its object.

*Landlords or Their Land Agents' Approval Necessary to Marriages.*—Within my personal recollection in this part of the country tenant-farmers had to go to the landlords or their agents or secretaries and get their landlord's approval of their sons' and daughters' marriages. If a farmer's son got married and the landlord or his agent was not consulted in his case, he would have to canvass for great influence when it would be time for him to become tenant, and even then he would stand great danger of never being accepted. The parents of the parties to be married would pretend to their landlord's agents that, owing to the holding being small or the quality of the land bad, they received a very small fortune. Castle Gregory was about the first place which I noticed to rebel against the system. Whenever a landlord, his agent or secretary passed by, the custom was to lift the hat off the head. Tenant farmers or any member

of their families not doing so were looked upon very unfavorably thereafter. With the Land League, these customs rapidly began to decline.

*La Varaha na Feir, or The Killing of People in Dingle by the Military.*—It appears a fierce encounter took place between soldiers and civilians in upper Main Street and Goat Street, Dingle, resulting in the killing of several persons. I regret I have forgotten grandmother's story in which was given the date, loss of life and circumstances that led to it.

*Lieth Broath, or Quirn.*—This is a kind of hand millstone for grinding corn which formerly could be found in almost every house in the barony, but at present has almost entirely disappeared.

*Middlemen and the Conacre System.*—Middlemen were landlords between the head landlords and the cultivators. Head landlords with large properties, wishing to live away in some other country, divided their properties and let them to persons called "middlemen." The middleman divided his portion and sublet the same at about treble the rent he was paying his head landlord. A third middleman would parcel his up into small divisions and sublet at an enormous profit. With a string of middlemen between the head landlord and the cultivator, an acre let by the head landlord to his immediate lessor for five shillings per acre might cost the cultivator five pounds. But that was not the worst. Very often a man was required to pay two or three times for the same patch of ground—even the man paying for his little "hundred" of ground had sometimes to pay twice for his little patch of potatoes—because two men would be claiming title to the land. Then there was the usual staff of office

men, rent warners, bog rangers, bailiffs and understrappers who claimed tributes as well as the middlemen. Tenants were called upon to cut, save and draw home corn, hay, turf and sea manure for nothing, leaving the women and children attend to the tenant's own crops. Whether the middlemen were of Irish descent or foreign, Catholic or Protestant it did not matter much to the tenant, as they were nearly all oppressors of the worse kind imaginable.

The middleman of the Eighteenth Century were the very scum of society and the seeds of immorality. They destroyed and brought to sorrow most young girls that put any confidence in them or entered their service. Parnell's land agitation destroyed the last of them.

*Molly McGuires.*—This name was given to three secret societies. The first was an Irish secret society, formed in or about the year 1833, in the Barony of Farney Co., Monogham, Ireland, to co-operate with the Ribbon-Men, and was called after C. McGuire, a leader in the Irish wars of 1641. The object of this society was to resist the distraining of cattle for rent, then common with landlords and middlemen. At that time very often a poor tenant had to pay five or six times for the same piece of ground, for which he had already paid his immediate lessor, because the immediate lessor, or landlord failed to pay one of the middlemen or landlords over him. (See Middlemen.) Distraining a tenant's cattle, impounding them, and

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\*Bess Rice and Clara Hussey were Catholics and belonged to the last century. While they held sway to the west of Dingle they both caused so much misery to their unfortunate tenants that the tears which fell from mothers, wives, children and husbands would, I am told, water those ladies' whole properties. The way in which they oppressed their victims would, it appears, be their most fitting epitaph.



selling them at auction before his eyes, in the name of British law and justice, for another man's debts, of which he had no knowledge or control and provided no legal remedy, to him appeared a wicked law. The McGuires applied the most desperate remedies available. Disguised as women, they rescued the cattle, flung boiling water and porridge on bailiffs, clubbed and stoned process servers, broke the locks on the pounds and released the cattle.

The activities of this society were confined to Ireland. Dressing in women's clothing caused the name "Molly" to be given to them.

As other new tenant-league societies grew up, they began to decline about the year 1856

The second and next Molly McGuires was an Irish-American secret society, with many branches in the coal mine districts of Pennsylvania, U. S. A. This society took the name of the Irish society, but these societies had no other connection whatsoever with each other, *only in name*. The first qualification required by the American society was that its members should be Irishmen by birth, or descent, and also Catholics. This society took an active part in politics, and had its secret signs and passwords conveyed to them from England, through a Board of Erin. For being a secret organization, the Catholic Church declared against its members.

From amongst the local branches of the society in the anthracite coal mines of Northeastern Pennsylvania another notorious secret criminal inner ring of Molly McGuires was formed. They converted the local branches of the Molly McGuires, for their own protection, against the encroachments of English miners



(Cousin Jacks and Cousin Germans included), on their jobs. Many of these Irish miners, previous to their coming to America, worked in the coal mines in England. In the latter country they received very poor treatment. They left that country carrying with them a deep hatred for anything that was English. Through secret societies, churches and lodges, to which bosses and superintendents belonged. English miners were making their way in amongst the Irish miners and Irishmen discharged. This was the start of the trouble. Soon the Molly McGuires by violence, conducted secretly, started at getting rid of superintendents, bosses and police hostile to them. In face of their condemnation by their church, they went forward, the most religious dropping away from the society.

In the war between the North and South, there was an increased demand for coal. English, Welsh and German miners were sent into the mines to work, and Irishmen of American birth or who were American citizens, taken away to fight. Replacing Irishmen that were fighting for America, with their most hated foes, the English, also with Welsh and Germans, caused trouble, with the result that they began to oppose conscription, and some army officers were roughly handled.

From this onward, rough handling, burning, faction fights and murder went on in the coal mines. The Molly McGuires were blamed for nearly all crimes, no matter who committed them. On or about the year 1865, they killed a colliery superintendent, which attracted widespread attention.

James McParlan, an Irish Catholic detective, joined the society and became one of its leaders. After three

years a member he secured damaging evidence which led to the execution of the ringleaders and imprisonment of a large number of the Molly McGuires.

*Moonlighting.*—In 1878 this name was assumed by an unknown leader in this county (Kerry), who wrote threatening letters containing a diagram of a coffin, skull-bones and a rifle. He signed himself "Captain Moonlight." Small bands of men, secretly armed and disguised, went by night and raided the houses of land grabbers, emergency men and bad land agents. Gladstone and Foster's Coercion Acts, prohibiting the holding of meetings or allowing the people any means whatsoever of seeking a redress of their grievances forced this regrettable but necessary evil. In some cases in those moonlighting raids lives were taken, and to satisfy the Government and the ascendancy class many innocent persons were hanged and others sent to penal servitude. The police and landlord under-strappers manufactured many crimes for which moonlighters and land leaguers were wrongly blamed and punished.\*

*National School Teachers Slapping Their Pupils for Speaking Irish.*—The movement for the preservation and revival of the Irish language put a stop to the National school teachers' habit of beating their pupils for speaking their native language.

When I was in Old Mexico I found the peons and

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\*Many in America unacquainted with Irish politics are under the impression that moonlighting is "moonshining," i. e., making poteen whisky. Moonshining is pretty common in backward portions of Florida and Virginia. Moonshiners have no welcome for strangers for fear of informing on them. They denounce the laws which compel them to work by night boiling the produce of their toil in the wilderness while no law stops ladies from wearing aigrettes or slaughtering fine birds of Florida for their feathers. On the approach of strangers moonshiners hide the still, extinguish their campfires and hide themselves in the forests very quickly.

Indians made use of a number of words corresponding in sound and meaning to words in the Irish language.

*Ogham Characters.*—These are a species of ancient Irish writings, marks and lines cut into upright pillar and monumental stones which are very numerous in Corkaguiny. It is said that the term Ogham was first applied to the sacred writings of our Druids.

*Orangemen.*—These are foreign Irishmen espousing the cause of William of Orange, who on the 1st of July, 1690, defeated dirty King James of England at the Battle of the Boyne. About the year 1795 Orangemen began to organize. Their first oaths and declarations were that they would never rest satisfied until they would be victoriously knee-deep in Papist blood, i. e., Catholic blood. In surpressing Irish societies, administering those oaths were also forbidden, and in 1857 the Lord Chancellor ordered that justices of the peace should not be members of Orange clubs. Orangemen in their 12th of July celebrations wrecked Catholic churches and police of the Orange type in our locality often celebrated the 12th of July by assaulting civilians, afterwards arresting them.

(See Supplementary History County Kerry for a clear account of the Battle of the Boyne, the Fall of Limerick and the Broken Treaty of Limerick.)

*Parnellite Splits.*—On the 6th day of December, 1890, this unfortunate Parnellite split took place. On the 17th of November of that year a decree of divorce was granted to Captain O'Shea, separating him from his wife on the grounds of improper conduct with Parnell. Three days after the decree was pronounced by the court, a meeting of the Irish Parliamentary party was held in Linster Hall Dublin. Here Justin

McCarthy proposed and Timothy Healy seconded that Parnell possessed the confidence of the Irish nation and five days after the Irish Parliamentary party unanimously elected him their leader. While these proceedings were taking place amongst the Irish Nationalists, Gladstone addressed a letter to John Morley, Chief Secretary of Ireland, demanding Parnell's resignation from the leadership. Parnell refused to yield to Gladstone's dictation.

Immediately the bishops and priests of Ireland were ranked in all their fury against Parnell and his supporters. During the whole of the years 1891, 1892 and 1893, almost on every Sunday the priests from the altars were denouncing the Parnellites. Young priests out of college were allowed to go to the utmost extremities. The whole country was very much divided, even members of the same family differed—the father argued against the son and the son did the same against the father. One party was called Parnellites and the other Anti-Parnellites. It was very plain that the Irish people were very unwilling to throw aside their fallen chief, especially at the bidding of one of Parnell's former political foes.

Parnell was a Protestant and divorces were pretty numerous in England, therefore many considered the question outside of the jurisdiction of the Catholic clergy, while English church and statesmen could not consistently make such a demand upon Irishmen. For the first time, here the clergy met serious opposition from the people. At meetings priests were hooted. Fights with fists and sticks became frequent.

In the West Kerry Parliamentary Division every parish priest, with the exception of Canon Daniel

O'Sullivan, did the utmost in his power to force the electors to vote for Sir Thomas G. Esmond, Anti-Parnellite, and against Edward Harrington, M. P. In this split a very fine brass band belonging to the Dingle Temperance Society was broken up and destroyed because it was to play at an Anti-Parnellite meeting, contrary to the wishes of the Parnellite members who were refused permission to take the band to one of Parnell's meetings. The Cattle Fair, re-established in Goat Street by the National League, was carried back to the old Brewery on the Spa Road. Lord Ventry was back again as Chairman of the Dingle Poor Law Board. It was a bad split for Ireland. Sir Thomas G. Esmond was declared elected, but as clerical intimidation was too fierce the result was more an unnecessary display of priestly power than a true representation of the choice of a free people.

*Peelers.*—This was the name given by the common people, in the Irish language, to the police force, because they were appointed in pursuance of the Peace Preservation Act of 1814, of which Sir Robert Peel was the proposer. In after years a like law was applied to England, and the English, to be different from the Irish, nicknamed their police "Bobbies," for Robert.

*Penal Laws.*—These were laws passed both by the English and Irish Protestant Parliaments, prohibiting a Catholic to live in England or Ireland, if he practiced any part of the Catholic religion. Priests were banished. However, they performed the Catholic services in caves, mountains and other hiding places.

By Catholic emancipation the Penal Laws were nearly abolished.

*Phoenix Park Murders.*—On the evening of the 6th of May, 1882, Lord Frederick Cavendish, a new and friendly Chief Secretary to Ireland, and Thomas H. Burke, a prominent Under-Secretary, were surrounded by the Invincibles while walking in the Phoenix Park, Dublin, and silently stabbed to death with amputating knives imported for the purpose.

While Foster was Chief Secretary, many attempts were made to murder him, but they all failed. His escapes were miraculous.

Burke was blamed for poisoning the mind of every Chief Secretary or Minister sent into the country, and also for the Coercion Act. Lord Cavendish was offered permission to escape, but he refused, and therefore met the fate of Burke. On the evidence of James Carey, the informer, the Invincibles were hanged. The Government tried to smuggle Carey to South Africa. He was followed by Pat O'Donnell, an Invincible, and shot on board the "Milrose" in or near Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

For the murder of James Carey, Pat O'Donnell was convicted on the 1st of December and executed on the 17th of December, 1883, at New Gate, London.

*Primrose League.*—This is a kind of a league of landlords, their ladies and followers, putting forward three principles, viz.: Maintenance of religion, estates of the realm and imperial ascendancy. It was founded in England in 1883. Meetings of the Primrose League were held in the Grove, Dingle, and many other places in the barony, which were attended by the "Shoneen" class. On the anniversary of the death of Lord Ba-

consfield members wear a bunch of roses, although not his favorite flower.

*Pitch Cap.*—This was a cap made of pitch or tar. In 1798, pitch caps were placed by English officers on the heads of the Irish rebels until they would stick on to the hair and flesh, then these were set on fire.

*Plan of Campaign.*—This was started by William O'Brien and John Dillion (without the approval of Parnell), about the year 1886. A fair rent was offered by the tenants to the landlords, which the latter refused. With a view to forcing the landlords to terms, a strike was started against the payment of any rent. The rents were paid into the "Plan of Campaign" and deposited in the bank. However, in many cases the landlords obtained garnishee orders from the courts and seized the money in the banks. Politicians blame William O'Brien and John Dillion for not using better judgment in this and the building of New Tipperary in 1887.

*Poff and Barrett Hanged.*—On the 22nd of January, 1883, Sylvester Poff and James Barrett were hanged at Tralee jail for murder. They were convicted by a packed jury at Cork. By public opinion they were found innocent and their execution is classed with Crown judicial murders of Kerry men.

*Poor Scholars or the Hedge School Teachers.*—These wandered all over the country and taught lessons, very often in the open air. They disappeared with the introduction of the national schools.

*Pope's Brass Band.*—This was the name applied by the English press to the Irish Parliamentary Party which distinguished itself in the fight against the ecclesiastical titles bill. Its leaders were Keogh and



Saddlier. The Irish people had such confidence in their Parliamentary representatives that they called them the "Irish Brigade." However, soon they discovered that the leaders were the worst traitors that ever stood on Irish soil. Keogh and Saddlier accepted Government positions. Judge Keogh cut his own throat while confined in a madhouse, and on the 16th of February, 1856, Saddlier committed suicide by swallowing prussic acid. Another prominent member of the band of traitors ended his life much after the fashion of the leaders, while the band melted quickly.

*Public Pilgrimage to Brandon Mountain.*—This took place on Sunday, the 28th of June, 1868. The religious services at the mountain peak were presided over by Dr. Moriarty, the Catholic Bishop of Kerry. About twenty thousand persons attended.

(See Hist. Co. Kerry, Chapter V, page 39.)

*Recantation (Public).*—During the great anti-Catholic campaign in the Dingle Peninsula, when a Roman Catholic became a Protestant it was the custom to supply him with a written document to be signed by him wherein he withdraw all he ever said against Protestantism and gave particulars of the superstition and errors of Popery which he then denounced. Sworn documents were read in Protestant churches and published. However, not more than five per cent of the alleged subscribers to those recantations and depositions knew what they contained.

*Saints' Birthdays.*—It was not on the birthdays but the death days that the early Catholic Church held festivals in honor of saints and martyrs, notwithstanding that such celebrations found in ancient documents may be given as that particular saint's birthday. St.



Bridget's Festival and St. Patrick's Festival are celebrated on the reputed anniversary of their deaths.

There are a few cases in our country where pagans, after being converted, baptised and received into the church, have their celebrations on the anniversary of their baptism or public entry. Usually they selected a saint's festival day for that purpose.

Birthday celebrations at the beginning of Christianity were looked on with anger by the Christians, because they were oppressed and persecuted by both Jews and pagans, and they found in their start the world hard, cold and cruel.

*Sein Fein.*—This is a new party which sprang into existence. Its motto is "Sein Fein," or "Ourselves Alone," meaning thereby that not through a British Parliament but through Irishmen working together in building up Irish industries and holding to the national language will the redemption of Ireland be accomplished.

The Sinn Fein movement is purely a political, economic and non-military society. The name "Sinn Fein Volunteers" today throughout the world is more wrongly applied to the Irish Revolutionary Party than calling the Battle of Bunker Hill to the battle fought between the British soldiers and American Revolutionists at Breed's Hill, Boston, Mass. The Irish Revolutionists were made up of Irish Volunteers, Gaelic Leaguers and other Irish societies. They protested against the youth of Ireland under false colors to be drawn into the British army. These societies pointed out that the English secured the first foothold on Irish soil by fraud and misrepresentation. Ever since then the English are the so-

called owners, contrary to the will of the Irish people. Protestant and Catholic alike wrote their protest with their life's blood against British tyrannical laws. Through disrespect for them the revolutionists were called "Sinn Fein Volunteers" by their opponents. These revolutionists now erroneously called "Sinn Fein Volunteers," broke out in the City of Dublin on Easter Monday, 24th of April. A body of revolutionary Irish Volunteers, dressed in Irish military uniform, marched in processional order through the streets of Dublin, took possession of the general postoffice and proclaimed an Irish Republic. Patrick H. Pearse was chosen as Provisional President, and James Connolly, Commander.

English military forces of all kinds, with artillery and field guns, were quickly brought against the revolutionists. Against wrecking fire of shot and steel, these Republican Irish Volunteers, with little food and no sleep for nearly a full week, fought against the British. During the fight a portion of the city was burned. The English army burned whole blocks of houses, apparently with the object of giving themselves a clear field for the play of artillery and field guns against the revolutionary army. The Volunteers also set fire to buildings, hoping that the flames might reach Dublin Castle and destroy that British official stronghold in the country, but without success.

Liberty Hall, the Revolutionary party headquarters, was bombarded from H. M. S. "Helga." Machine guns secretly hidden by the government in the Custom-House were also turned upon it and it was destroyed.

Early in the fight James Connelly, the Irish Commander-in-Chief, was wounded and nearly died. P. H. Pearse took command. Foreign relief from Germany was expected, but it did not come, as Sir Roger Casement was arrested in Tralee and the vessel containing arms sunk.

After a week's hard fighting, both day and night, the British troops were getting the best of the Irish Volunteers. P. H. Pearse saw that they were completely surrounded by troops and artillery. In order to prevent further slaughter of the unarmed, he agreed to surrender and accordingly advised the Republicans. Ladies and shop girls fought bravely for Irish freedom. Contrary to the rules of warfare, sixteen leaders were shot dead. Eight of them signed the document proclaiming the Irish Republic.

The men shot after surrendering were Patrick H. Pearse, Thomas J. Clark, Thomas MacDonagh, Joseph Plunket, Edward Daly, William O'Hanrahan, William Pearse, Edmond Kent, John McBride, Cornelius Culbert, J. J. Hewston, Michael Mallon, Thomas Kent, James Connelly, John M. Dermott, F. S. Skeffington. Killing these men cannot improve the conditions of the country because they were no traitors to their native land. They were prepared to accept aid for the freedom of Ireland from any country and refused to be hirelings.

The immediate cause of the revolution was, it appears, a secret document distributed in cypher amongst

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P. S.—While this book was in the hands of Messrs. Sealy, Bryer & Walker, printers, Dublin, the war broke out. The premises of the printers, together with several manuscripts of the author, were burned. The account here of the revolution is added now to the part of the burned copies.

the military authorities containing instructions to the military to seize the Sinn Feiners, Gaelic Leaguers and Irish Volunteers' headquarters, and arrested the leaders. Conscription was then to be enforced in Ireland. Postoffice officials who were Irish Republicans evidently kept a close eye on the Government proceedings and the documents fell into the hands of the Irish Republicans. The Irish Volunteers stood pledged to the single service of Ireland, and decided that if they were to die fighting they should do it for the cause of Ireland. Accordingly they broke out two days before the day fixed for capturing their strongholds.

The plan of the British Government failed completely, but it cost many valuable lives, both of men and women—Catholic and Protestant. The revolution is condemned by Mr. John Redmond and his other Parliamentary followers. On the other hand, John Redmond and his followers are classed as traitors and job hunters by the Irish Volunteers in Ireland, and almost by every national body in the United States, and the spirit to avenge the deaths of these martyrs is growing fast.

Since 1907, the present Parliamentary party showed signs of departure from the course outlined by Parnell, by accepting a half measure of Home Rule.\* The Sinn Fein National Council repudiated a definition by the National Directory of the Irish demand, to the effect that the minimum Irish demand was a sovereign Parliament, in Irish affairs "to be equal to and co-extensive with those of the Parliament of Great Britain," or, in other words, Grattan's Irish Parliament.

When the half measure of Home Rule was passed and Sir Edward Carson, a Unionist M. P., went to

Ulster to get the people of Ulster to sign a covenant to resist with firearms Home Rule, he boasted he had 40,000 (more or less) Ulster volunteers to prevent the Act from going into operation. The Irish Volunteers asked the Government of Great Britain "If the Orangemen can arm and drill, why cannot the rest of Ireland do the same?" Irish Volunteers were allowed to arm because the war cloud was hanging over Europe and it was considered useful to have Irish half-trained soldiers ready to fight.

When the European war broke out, Home Rule was quickly passed, and on the 18th of September, 1914, signed by King George, and placed on the Statute Book, but suspended from operation until after the end of the war. The German people were painted in every false color for the Irish people. Most of the common people did not believe that the Germans were as bad as they were painted. Moreover they had no confidence in the British Government and looked upon this Home Rule scheme as a recruiting bait.

Next a demand was made on the Irish people to "furnish men to fight for the protection of their homes

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\*Edward Harrington, M. P. for West Kerry, addressing a meeting held by Parnell in the Square Tralee, said: "We will have no half measures of Home Rule, and we will have no Chief but Charlie."

†When Jamison raided South Africa the Boers did not shoot him, although his crime was the most serious one. Yet the English Government under Premier Asquith had James Connelly, a wounded, dying soldier, propped up against the wall because he was not able to stand on his limbs and shot dead.

\*\*The following is a copy of a letter addressed by the author to Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, M. P., on the 1st of January, 1916:

San Francisco, January 1, 1916.

**STOP RECRUITING IRISHMEN, PREACH PEACE, AND VOTE  
AGAINST CONSCRIPTION.**

Dear Sir: I understand that it is the intention of the British Government to introduce a bill for conscription. Since I left Ireland, I notice many strange changes have come over the National leaders of Ireland. They are not as fearless as they were in the days of Parnell

and Home Rule." Then a split started in the ranks of all Irish Volunteers. John Redmond preached that "the cause of the Allies was just and the neutrality of Ireland impossible, and that England stood for the protection of little nationalities." The Irish Volunteers answered that they stood pledged to the single service of Ireland; that the war was not an Irish war, but an English war, and in that war Irishmen should not fight; that the sacrifice for the honor of having Home Rule on the Statute Book only, was too great; and also Irishmen received only coercion from England until England's difficulty.

By the Defense of the Realms Act free speech was completely suppressed and Irishmen imprisoned. For advising his son not to join the army, a father was imprisoned and in fact conscription was partly in force in Ireland, but not on the Statute Book.\*\* When the people were deserted by their leaders, free speech suppressed, as usual in such cases the country became honeycombed with secret societies. Now Sir Rodger Casement is hanged on a charge of high treason.†

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and they completely lost or destroyed their independence. I suppose England will now want Irishmen to fight for her and therefore extend conscription to Ireland:

My views are:

1. FOR PEACE, first and last.
2. NEUTRAL as between the leading nations responsible for the war, viz., England, Germany and Russia.
3. STRONGLY OPPOSED TO IRISHMEN being sent OUT OF IRELAND to fight.
4. England is not fighting to protect the nuns of Belgium from the ravages of the Germans, because the British soldiers destroyed the women of their own land by thousands before leaving for the battlefield.
5. England is not fighting for the protection of little nationalities, because that country was the greatest exterminator that ever appeared on the face of the globe. She put out of existence the two Boer Republics, as recently as 1902.
6. That the war is a mass murder of human beings carried on for greed.
7. Opposed to secret treaties or invisible governments, especially those binding the people without the full knowledge, consent and vote

The History of the Revolution of 1916 is still making.

*Skelligs*.—(See my History of the Skellings, Basket Islands and the West of Dingle, to which you will add the disputes between Rome and the Irish Church over the observance of Easter.)

*Soupers and Souperism*.—During the last black famine the Irish Protestant Mission Society established in the Dingle Peninsula soup and gruel kitchens for the purpose of tempting starving mothers with young children to become Protestants. A Dingle Catholic curate named O'Connor called those who accepted the soup on condition of joining the Protestant church or Scripture classes "Soupers." Finally the expression was extended to all of that class of Roman Catholics who while still believing in their former religion went under the color and pretense of converts for lucre and joined the Protestant Church. (See my book on the Skelligs and the Souper Campaign.)

*Spanish Armada*.—This was a mighty big fleet of Spanish ships which in 1588 came to fight against England. Many of them wrecked by a storm on our

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of the people of the contracting countries, especially treaties made in support of an unjust cause.

The history of this war now raging in Europe is still in its making. To the one standing here it appears to be a monstrous mass murder of human beings who are made the victims of a scramble of European financiers, their rulers and supporters, for many years plotting to rob one another of trade profit and territory. It is plain to a child that each of the nations of Europe for many years were struggling to out do each other in building murderous equipment and forming compacts for the same purpose. The sudden killing of the Crown Head of Austria was like setting a lighted match to oil barrels already in position for the blaze.

The plain leading facts as they appear to me are that Germany wants the expansion of territory and sea power, and England is jealous of the rapid growth of sea commerce of Germany, and therefore avails herself of this opportunity to destroy it for ages. I honestly believe that all the other arguments about militarism little nationalities, etc., ought to at once be rejected as manufactured excuses to justify war.

Having come to the conclusion that this is legalized murder of the



coast. A big ship called "Our Lady of the Rosary," went down in Blasquet Islands Sound. The destruction of the Armada caused Spain to lose the supremacy of the sea.

(See my book on the Skellig and Blasket Islands for more particulars.)

*Statute of Kilkenny.*—Statute of Kilkenny was a law passed by the son of Edward III, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, preventing English settlers speaking the Irish language, wearing Irish dress or adopting Irish names or customs.

*St. Patrick's Day.*—Ireland's national holiday. This is the date (17th of March) set down for the death of St. Patrick.

*Tanistry.*—This was an ancient law and custom amongst the Irish whereby the owner made equal divisions of his lands amongst his sons, legitimate or illegitimate alike. This was abolished by British law in 1604.

*Tara.*—On a hill in the County Meath stood a court called Tara, where the Kings of Ireland were crowned. Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator, held a repeal meeting there which was attended by one million persons.

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people carried on in the false color and pretense of patriotism for the benefit of gold crazed human wolves, as between the three leading nations at war, the author is neutral. However, he is opposed to the shedding of blood in such a wicked cause, or fond Irish mothers raising children to be targets for rifles at the becking of every false leader. Look at the fruits those rulers and politicians of Europe produced; they have washed the frontier red with a sea of human blood; peaceful homes are in ruins; the wild wail of women, children or aged parents cannot stop their hungry craving for human slaughter; by soldiers at home and abroad women are ravaged; the flower of Europe are drawn from the common people by thousands, and most of them must pay for militarism with their life's blood in the trenches. Cattle, sheep, hares and deer, will take the places of Irish, Scotch, Welch, and English, shot down in this war.

England, contrary to the rules of warfare, tries to starve the civil population of Germany, and in return Germany in a more scientific manner does the same thing to England by sinking great liners, thereby



The Irish protested against this being added to tithes of the Earl of Aberdeen, the last Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

*Tenants' Defense League.*—This was an offshoot of the suppressed Land League, and Irish National League. It was formed after the latter was suppressed by Balfour's Coercion Act of 1887. The object of this league was to defend the tenant farmers against tyrannical landlords, and to obtain the land for the people at just rents. This league was announced by Parnell and William O'Brien in July of 1888. In the winter of that year a branch of it was started in Castle-Gregory by the Rev. John Molyneaux, then P. P. of Castlegregory.

*Tenant League.*—This league was organized in 1850. On the 4th of July, 1851, a great meeting was held on the site of the Battle of the Boyne. In 1852 a general election took place and about fifty-eight leaguers were elected. However, their leaders broke their pledges, betrayed the Irish people, destroyed the party and within a few years after killed themselves. A branch of this league was established in Dingle.

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causing death on the ocean, of innocent people. **Hatred for the people of the nations at war with each other, will live in Europe for the next generation.** The slaughter of human beings, now going on, is shocking. It is clearly against the mandate of God, reason and common sense. Civilization is trampled on; barbarism is substituted; bands of legalized murderers sit in gilt chambers, drinking wine bought with the blood of their countrymen in the trenches. They fill their pockets with gold, make their homes comfortable, while their neighbours hearts are sad, their hearths cold, their pockets empty and their sons and relatives slaughtered in the battle fields. I honestly believe that it is much nobler to die in thousands in the cause of humanity and freedom than to draw a single sword in this disgraceful war. You leaders of destruction and legalized criminals in power, remember God's commandment—"Thou shalt not kill."

Murder, no matter whether judicial, legalized or church sanctioned, will still remain murder, and will continue to cry to heaven for vengeance. "To-day thou art," great and mighty men; "to-morrow thou art not"—yes, a cold lump of clay with the skeletons of murdered men,

(See the Pope's Brass Band, also Supplementary History of the County Kerry, for more particulars.)

*Thierna-Dubh's Raid, or the Black Earl's Raid.*—This was applied to the Earl of Ormond, who was Lord Governor of Munster. During the Great Desmond Wars, in 1580, he converted the whole barony of Corkaguiny into one great slaughter-house. He went to oppose the Spaniards, then with a Pope's banner, at Fort-del-Ore, in Smerwick Harbor, and also to capture the 15th Earl of Desmond, a Catholic, because the latter was suspected of favoring his cousins in a rebellion against the British crown, and Ormond was anxious to possess Desmond's confiscated estates. At Tralee, Ormond, the Black Earl, divided his forces into three divisions, and from thence marched westward towards Dingle, through Slieve-Mish. In this journey the English soldiers slaughtered every man, woman and child they met. At Standbally, they tossed the children for pastime from pike to pike and next stabbed to death the feeble mothers. Father Dominick O'Daly calls it "Cooling their impious thirst with the blood of Catholics." Classing Father O'Daly as a supporter of the Desmonds and rejecting his evidence and taking their own evidence, the author finds that in the commander's letters to Queen Elizabeth they promised "If God will give us bread, we doubt not but to

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the tears of widows and the crying orphans you caused, standing before you. You may be sure a just God will not be fooled by the arguments of cunning counselors, judges, ministers, priests, bishops or pious frauds, who may be hired or engaged to bring their country's youth to the slaughter house.

God protect the children of Erin from being drawn in amongst those mad dogs. Those who do the fighting ought to ask themselves what are their interests in the war, and what is the price agreed upon to be paid before they are thrown to the wolf-dogs.

GOD SAVE IRELAND.

Yours, etc.,  
P. M. FOLEY.

make as bare a country as ever a Spaniard put a foot on," meaning the Dingle peninsula. (Pehalm's Letters to Queen Elizabeth.) "non was spared the toddling child, the feeble old man, the blind, the lame, the idiot, the strong man and the weak shepherd." As the soldiers of Queen Elizabeth entered a village they had the laggards set on fire. Mothers clasping their babies together with the dwellers were surrounded and driven into the flames or cut off with the sword. The English soldiers were hunting defenseless poor people for pleasure. The only way to receive pardon was to bring the bleeding head of one of their countrymen and throw it at the head of an English commander in order to sow hatred for one another amongst the Irish. This wicked journey of the Earl of Ormond, such was the blight that it brought on the homes of everybody that it left a memory everywhere through which he passed, which can never fade while a Father can speak to a son. The soldiers under Ormond, like ravenous beasts, having once tasted human blood, could not quench their craving for slaughter. Young women, who refused to be outraged were hanged from trees by the hair of their heads. When they could not subdue men they turned their weapons against women and children.

"His hosts are all gather'd, his cordon is set,  
Strong and close wove the meshes—wide stretches  
the net,  
As it sweeps the doom'd district, its progress thus  
trace'd,  
All before as a garden—behind as a waste.

Their course is unsparing and searching as fire,  
 Leaves not sheaf in the barn, nor hoof in the byre,  
 While hymning their triumph, in concert combined,  
 The wild wail of women, with the lowing of kine.  
 The raid is accomplished—the war waves roll back,  
 Smoke, ember, and bloodprints are left on the track,  
 And long the scared mother, her infant will tame,  
 With the terrors attached to the *Thierna-Dubhs'* name.

—Four verses of twenty published in the Kerry Magazine, a publication under the control of a Protestant minister.

Spencer the poet described the people “as emerging like ghouls to feed on corpse, carrion and grass.” “All such people as the met they did without mercie putte to the sworde By this means the whole countrie having no cattel nor kine left they were driven to such extremities for want of vittels they were either to die or perish in the famine or to die under the sword.”—The Black Earl's Raid on Corkaguiny in 1580 in Hooker's Chronicle A. D. 1580.

(The Burning of Dingle, Lord Gray Slaughter at Fort-del-Ore and the torture of Kerry martyrs and other subjects are lost in the Dublin fire.)

Before the Fitzmaurices arrived in Dingle, or Fort-del-Ore, three persons landed in Dingle off Spanish ships. They were seized by government spies, and first taken before the Earl of Desmond. The vain creature ordered them to be taken before the authorities in Limerick. Two persons turned out to be Dr. Patrick O'Haly, Bishop of Mayo, and Father Cornelious O'Rourke. To extract a confession the English had them tortured. When this failed they were

hanged to a tree and used as targets by the soldiers. Desmond, in his pretensions of loyalty, took credit for this act.

The reader is referred to the following Protestant authorities: Hooker's Chronicle, 1590, Smith's History of Kerry, Pelham's Letters and the State Papers from 1579 to 1585.

*Thomas-An Achig*.—Parson Moriarty, late of Millstreet, County Cork, a native of the Dingle District, was so-called because in his writings addressed to outsiders he placed under false colors the religious practices of his Catholic neighbors, and manufactured crimes on paper out of trifles.

(See my book on the Skellig, Blasket Islands and the West of Dingle for the state of religion in those parts during the Souper Campaign.)

*Tithes*.—This was a tax of one-tenth of the produce or its value authorized by law to be paid for the support of the clergy and the Church of England. Because the Church of England was not the church of the people of Ireland, the payment of tithes by Roman Catholics caused famines and was resisted with bloodshed. Often a poor man's cow was seized in our parts and sold for eight shillings (less than two dollars) to satisfy the tithes. The case was still worse when he did not belong to that church for which he had to pay. A short time ago the tithes were transferred from the tenants to the landlords, but the landlords saddled them on to the tenants again by increasing their rents.\*

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\*Parnell and the Land League put a stop to landlords increasing tenants' rents above the fair value of the land.

It appears payment of tithes to Pagan priests existed long before the Christian era. Until the English introduced their system into Ireland, the Irish Catholic clergy were content with a voluntary offering, mostly in kind.

*Tithes Artificial Famine.*—This famine started in the winter of 1739 and ended in 1748. The start of it was caused by a frost which penetrated very deep into the ground, destroying potatoes. In an effort to escape payment of tithes to ministers of the established church, people sowed only as much potatoes and grain crops as were absolutely necessary. A dreadful famine came. Black '46 and '47 were no comparison to the famine which ended in 1748.

(See Supplementary History, Co. Kerry-Corkaguiny.)

*Treaty of Limerick.*—The Treaty of Limerick was made on the 3rd of October, 1691, between King William's army (English), and the Irish, on the fall of Limerick and Atlone. By the articles of the treaty, full religious liberty and the exercise of their trades, professions and callings were guaranteed by the English to the Irish Catholics. The Irish soldiers sailed away to France. Immediately England broke every article of the treaty and for religious liberty gave Penal Laws allowing no man to live in Ireland, possess property, exercise a trade or profession, if he was a Catholic.

*Turn Coats.*—Persons who changed their religion for lucre during the Souper Campaign were called "Turn Coats" by their Catholic neighbors.

*United Irishmen.*—The Society of United Irishmen was founded by T. W. Tone, a Protestant. His object was to unite Protestants and Catholics of the North

and South to join hands for the freedom of Ireland. The United Irishmen rebelled against the English in 1798.

*Wicker Baskets.*—Carrying loads on horseback by means of wicker baskets suspended on both sides of the horse is now almost everywhere out of practice. I remember clearly when the first common cart entered the villages of Ballynalockon, Cloghane, and places in Dunquin Parish.

*White Boys.*—These were a body of young men who appeared in many places in Munster between 1761 and 1763. The reason they were called White Boys was because they wore white linen frocks and shirts over their coats. They openly resisted the enclosure of commons and the compulsory payment of excessive tithes levied on Roman Catholics for the support of ministers, wardens, preachers and the upkeep of Protestant churches. Because the tax was raised chiefly on tillage lands, consequently it forced the farmers to sow very little potatoes and let their lands for grazing. The horrors of the artificial famines created by the tithes between 1739 and 1748 when mothers devoured their own children and children ate their dead parents was fresh in the memory of the people. Then the Protestant Church of Ireland was not the church of the people. In one of the White Boy uprisings, by hamstringing and like methods they killed and destroyed cattle in thousands making certain that if a potato famine existed that year there would be plenty of meat to prevent starvation. In this great cattle slaughter farmers' sons, unknown to their fathers, took the lead in maiming their own cattle. At Ballynalackon in the Parish of Cloghane, is a place



called *Cnockane-na-bouchaelec-bawna*, where local White Boys of that place assembled. The White Boys were suppressed by military force and the ringleaders hanged.

*Wild Geese.*—These were young Irish immigrants who in the 18th Century went to France; there many of them joined the Irish Brigade in the service of France. In the Battle of Fontenoy they trampled the British flag in the dust and swept before them in the wildest rout England's columns of reserves to the war cry of "Revenge! Remember Limerick!! Dash down the Sassenach!!!" Immediately after that England cancelled some of her Penal Laws.

Many persons from the Dingle Peninsula about this time went as "Wild Geese" and settled in France

*Wreck of the "Port-Yorack."*—This Glasgow iron-clad barque was wrecked in Brandon Bay on the 29th of January, 1894, and all the crew of twenty-one drowned. The vessel was laden with copper ore. On inquiry it was found that the barque was insufficiently manned, badly provisioned and the crew suffered great hardships during the voyage, especially returning from South America. The owner was fined £70.

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*Fenianism.*—This was a secret society formed for the purpose of establishing an Irish Republican Brotherhood and severing all connection with the British crown. James Stephens was the leader and supreme chief of the Fenian revolutionary movement. It went as far as to decree a republic established. It destroyed some of the best regiments in the British army and extended to the navy, as well as to parts of France, America and England. The Fenians took the field



in Cahirsciveen in February, 1867, and in the counties of Cork, Limerick, Clare, Waterford and Tipperary, Dublin and South on the 5th of March following.

This revolution did not succeed in its purpose.





# Curious Customs





## PREFACE.

**T**HIS little hand book deals with the curious customs and traditions, chiefly in West Kerry, in common with other parts of Ireland. It is the fourth book issued by the author on Corkaguiny, of a series designated to present to the reader all essential historical, curious customs, and traditional information, relating to the County of Kerry.

In undertaking the toils of this particular volume, the principal object the writer has in view is first and foremost to destroy the hatcheries of all objectionable remains of foreign superstitions, customs, fraudulent practices, and like diseases imposed upon us, and which may still be found here and there lingering in the district. By discriminating between truth and falsehood, giving reason and common sense for what is nonsensical and discreditable, the author expects to weed out of the minds of the future manhood of this locality the superstitious poison of foreign countries, handed down to us through "wise, sensible and truthful" old women, and instead thereof he is endeavoring to kindle in the breast of every young man the spirit of being reasonably fearless in supernatural affairs, self-reliant, careful, truthful and just in other matters.

The second aim of the author is to record a few of the most important curious customs and traditions of the people in the past. This is done both for the amusement and the information of the coming generation. However, it is well to remember that this is not a complete list. The author left behind him sufficient materials for others to follow on the trail which he is the first to "blaze" in those parts.

Writers and tourists visiting West Kerry and reading this book, might be inclined to go away under the impression that the people of Corkaguiny are exceptionally superstitious and peculiar, as compared with those of other portions of the United Kingdom and the world. If we will but calmly examine the records and customs of the world, we will at the first glance see that even in our darkest hour we were far in advance of many of them in that respect. About the Thirteenth or Fourteenth Century, superstitions began to creep in amongst Christians. They increased in many forms immediately. In Ireland slight traces of the old Pagan superstitions lingered amongst the people, but between 1580 and 1736 in England, *no less than thirty thousand persons were publicly hanged for being witches*, and most of the poor innocent creatures were burned at the stake. The most learned judges of the English courts declared from their benches that witchcraft existed, and that persons in one league with the devil could raise storms, destroy life and property, by no further act than taking off their stockings and steeping them in soap and water. They even went so far as to force their victims to believe and confess that they were witches. Only that England was so much engaged in hounding to death the Catholic priests, Heaven knows how many more would have fallen.

In 1716 it appears one Mrs. Hicks and her little daughter were hanged for selling their souls to the devil, and their accusers charged them with raising a storm by soaking stockings in a lather of soap.

Scotland was buried in superstition. Calvin and Luther, both the great heads of the Protestant Reformation, believed in witchcraft, and the King of Scot-

land, when he ascended the throne of England, by tongue, pen and fire, advocated the rack for the witches.

I believe Italy, Spain and France, three Catholic countries, were the first to reject witchcraft. Germany, although at first very slow to believe in witchcraft, burned them by the thousands, and that in a most barbarous manner. The Puritan fathers of New England had the hangman's rope pretty busy in Boston Common with the witches of Salem, Massachusetts, and the Quakers of other parts of the State. If a man did not believe in witches, he was classed worse than a heretic.

Public execution of witches in England was stopped by law, I believe about the year 1736. During all that time Ireland was trampled under the heels of superstitions. Anglo-Norman lords were a party to the laws which caused so much innocent blood to flow as divine perfume from 1600 to 1736, in cases of witchcraft and "Papists," both in England and her colonies. Naturally, their castles in Ireland had the foul air of superstition and adoration about them. In Ireland they suppressed education, and tried to make themselves the only lords which the people had to serve and adore on earth or in heaven. They abused their powers, and the Irish people at last refused to have those false Gods, and now they are almost driven out of the country

Irishmen were not ever very much inclined to marry their daughters to those degenerated "false gods," bearing a British or foreign title. They usually left such honors to the ladies of other countries, many of the latter unfortunate vain-minded creatures after-

wards returning to their native lands bringing, in addition to a costly bought title, a decree of divorce. It ought to be remembered that even today, notwithstanding England's proud boast of democracy, it is probably the worst country in the world for rank, title and blue-blood lords—one class looking down with contempt on the other. In the House of Lords you have dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, bishops and barons. They cannot understand that "all men were created equal," only when they want the common people to fight their battles.

Notwithstanding the isolated and backward state of Ireland under alien rule, yet as far as the author can ascertain the Irish people never demanded a single life to be sacrificed in cases of witchcraft, and if any individual fell, it was at the command of the foreigner and to satisfy his craving for blood and sacrifice. Ireland appears to be much cleaner from superstition than her neighbors in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of the Christian era.

The writer is not finding fault with the people of those countries which honestly believed in the existence of witches, but he is protesting against those who leave the very dens of superstition and come to Ireland to magnify trifles, at the same time pretending that they have none of their own. Every country has had people some of whom are more or less superstitious. It is not even confined to any one religion. In many houses in America for good luck you will find the horseshoe nailed inside over the door. There are locomotive engineers in the New England States who will not very willingly take out a train engine bearing the number "thirteen." Persons traveling with



me refused to sleep in the next vacant room to me in Seattle, Washington, because the number of it was "thirteen." Among the first who followed the trail of the "forty-niners" to California, were persons who would not start on any part of their journey on a Friday, and through superstition carried the feet of rabbits with them in their pockets.

A lady in one of the New England States in the East, who proudly boasted of her forefathers crossing the Atlantic in the "Mayflower," objected in my presence to rocking an empty cradle because it would bring misfortune to the house.

As late as December, 1910, I saw persons within Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts, watching patiently for the resurrection of Mrs. Eddy Baker, the head of Christian Science. These and many of her followers firmly believed she would reappear and deliver a message from the dead to the living. However, the learned lady is still sleeping in silence. What would the English press say if this happened in Ireland?

With regard to Irish kings, they were not inferior to the latter-day kings of England. King John of England in 1204 imprisoned Jews, plucked out their teeth and eyes and slaughtered them. He was excommunicated by the Pope. King Henry VIII. murdered four of his wives and ripped one of them open on child's birth to have a son succeed him to the throne. Englishmen ought to read the sad story of the Tower of London before opening their lips on ancient Irish kings.

Then, as to morals, the author believes Ireland will be found as clean from the scarlet plague of the "red-

light district" as any country in the world. Look at the British soldiers who boasted that they were going to "defend the Catholic nuns in Belgium from the Huns," destroying the women of their own land by the thousands before leaving for the front!

Now, as to curious customs, you will find boys and girls "courting" in Ireland, "bundling" in Wales, "spooning" until midnight in the United States, and for three long years a young man with window bars between him and his sweetheart is "playing the bear" in Mexico, before he is admitted into her room, even in presence of members of her family. In England, every third county has had a different custom, and many of them are considered pretty objectionable.

The original intention of the author was to have his work printed in Ireland, for Irish readers, but that horrible war in Europe, which has caused the most widespread pain, misery and suffering ever inflicted upon the human race, made him change his plans, and print the book in the United States, but the cost will be much more and the price of each copy proportionately higher.

By the campfires of California, and in the sandy desert of Nevada, over five thousand miles away from his native land, this book has been written by the author during his spare hours. Therefore, the writer knows that faults will be found with the work, and errors discovered therein. However, he is confident that it is free from serious errors. Apart from the honest critic, of course, there will appear the natural-born "fault-finder." To men of the latter disposition the writer has no apology to offer, and it is his intention to take no notice of anything said or written

by such persons, further than to express his regret that they did not undertake the work themselves, and, whenever his rights shall expire, they will have an opportunity to improve, alter, or amend his plans—probably about forty-four years' time.

This work is not expected to satisfy all classes. The author has no intention whatsoever of giving offense to any person, religion, race or nationality, but it is to be feared that in his effort to establish truth and equity passages may appear herein which will displease some individuals. If so, the writer very much regrets it, but at the same time the reader should remember that it is his duty to record those regrettable events and set them in a true light for the judges of the future world.

In style and arrangement of this book there is a slight departure from the plans of his previous works, namely, that each subject set forth herein will be found in alphabetical order. This he trusts will prove satisfactory to the reader.

AUTHOR.

Dated in the State of Nevada, this 4th day of July, 1915.

*Erin, though far from your mountains now, with me, you are still Achusla Geal Machree.*

*All Fools' Day.*—This falls on the first of April, when it is customary to play tricks upon each other. The young people find great diversion in sending persons on errands which end in disappointment for the sendee and merriment for the sender, the laugh at all times being in proportion to the trouble given.

Among some of the tricks played was at a very early hour in the morning to knock at a window and call a farmer out of bed, telling him that cattle had destroyed his potatoes and corn fields. He would run with all his might, sometimes half undressed, to find no cattle before him.

Pieces of paper would be pinned onto the tails of a coat and valuable looking packages containing a stone or a piece of iron would be left in the track of a passerby so that if he kicked it he would remember it. Sometimes a stiff purse would be placed on the road or footpath with a string attached to it, and it would be jerked away by those hiding behind a fence, gate or doorway when the fool would be in the act of grasping for it. Probably this custom originated in France and was borrowed by England, to whom we are indebted for it.

*Ancient Crossroads and Burial Customs.*—At funerals to the west of Dingle, a custom prevails of lowering the coffin containing the remains at certain ancient crossroads and praying for the dead. This is not practiced on the Castle Gregory side of Brandon Mountain, but there, on lowering the coffin into the grave, the nails are drawn from the cover of the coffin.

## AND CURIOUS CUSTOMS

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The custom of lowering the coffin at crossroads is a very ancient one, not alone in the Dingle district, but in other countries outside of Ireland. The origin of it was due to persons who committed suicide not allowed to be interred in consecrated ground, were buried upon the nearest crossroad thereto, i. e., at the junction of four roads.\* Whenever a funeral passed by, the corpse was lowered, people knelt and prayed for the soul of the persons buried at the crossroads.

In the course of time the custom of burying dead bodies on the crossroads went out of practice, and the names of the persons buried there were forgotten, but the habit of lowering the dead body continued and a prayer was offered to God for both those buried on the crossroads and also for the soul of the person whose funeral then took place. Then when the penal laws were enforced, with military in Dingle, the religious rites which should be said at the graveside for the deceased were recited at the old crossroads.\* Praying for the dead at ancient crossroads nearest the graveyards, therefore, is an act of piety and charity of an old standing.

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\*In old Mexico a large wooden cross marks the spot where murders have taken place. On my way over the mountains and grand canyons between Beristan (Carman) and Tepexico, In the State of Pueblo, I saw houses very often having two and three crosses near them, and also that the gable ends of their houses were crowned with one or more crosses. Having heard a good deal of talk about the bandits and murders of that part of the country through which I was passing, I asked if all those crosses which I saw represented murders only. I was informed by the Indians, and Mexicans themselves, that it was for a long time the custom to erect crosses where sudden deaths occurred from other causes, such as suicides, man or woman devoured by a wild beast, or the like, as well as in cases of murder and manslaughter. Furthermore, they told me (through an Italian as interpreter) that the crosses upon so many Indian houses were an exhibition of their attachment to the cross of Christ. I found Pueblo a strong Catholic State, and the crosses are put standing, as near as circumstances will permit, to where the murdered

*Ancient National Dances.*—The most common dances\* in our locality were jigs, reels, hornpipe and country dance, or Reencafadah. These were followed by a form of dance called "sets," and the German "waltz" was transmitted to us by the English. Movable platforms for dancing upon them were placed on the country crossroads, and boys and girls danced in the open air in the afternoons on Sundays. The clergy took a dislike to all dances, with the result that open-air dancing was almost suppressed, but of recent years it was revived by the Gaelic League.

*Ardnane.*—Carding, spinning and story telling by night is now gone out of fashion—newspapers are driving away the latter.

*Banshee.*—This is supposed to be a fairy visitant in the shape of an old woman whose wailing around the home of a sick person foretold death. Of course, it is superstition to think that an old woman dead and gone will return from the grave wailing or calling for her victim, or carry off a member of any family.

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\*Dancing masters between 1775 and 1780 were paid sixpence (twelve cents) a quarter with meals for teaching dancing to a whole family. However, a dancing master's quarter was much less than three months.

man expired, and if possible in view of persons passing by as an appeal to the traveler to pray for the soul of the person or persons who fell there.

Amongst other curious customs practiced by those queer people the following were impressed on my memory: That Mexico City has funeral street cars, which I have not seen in any other part of the world. To understand my point more clearly, the electric street cars running on rails with an electric car as a hearse, pick up the dead bodies and carry them to the graveyard or cemetery. Here the coffin is unlocked and the corpse must be examined and clearly identified to the complete satisfaction of the caretaker, after which the coffin is again locked and the corpse buried in a grave or tomb leased for seven years. At the end of seven years or thereabouts, out of the tomb or grave the remains must go unless the lease is renewed or the grave bought forever at an enormous sum of about \$400.

As I had not sufficient command of the Spanish language to enable me to put the question direct to the natives and obtain information from their lips without the assistance of an interpreter, the figures set down

Nevertheless, there must be something of an unknown nature existing in the shape of a wireless telephone, electric feeling or otherwise in the blood, flesh or nature of certain Celtic families whereby some relative of a sudden feels, pictures and imagines death, trouble or misfortune approaching without apparently any means of knowing it at the time. I hope science will soon more clearly solve the cause of this and thereby strip off all superstition and uncertainty.

*Begrudging.*—Persons admiring beasts or individuals and praising them without saying "God bless them," if they died or became sick the blame would be laid onto them, and some would say such a person possessed an "evil eye" and his visits thereafter would not be very desirable. However, this superstition can be found as bad in other countries.

*Bellman.*—The bellman with his hand-bell still survives in Dingle. He usually announces sales by public auction. Missing or impounded cattle, also property lost or found, money lost about thirty-three years ago and found by another, were nearly always recovered by giving a shilling or one shilling and sixpence to the bellman. I am sure this was due to the moral influence of the clergy over the people.

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for me as the prices of a grave are so much at variance, as well as the form of procedure in evicting a dead man from his grave in Mexico, that I leave that part of the matter to abler authorities.

In connection with the wakes of their dead, in our camps I noticed that they did drink a milk-like liquid called "pulgue," extracted from the mague or century plant. It has the taste, color and appearance of milk, but it is so intoxicating that if a person should drink any large quantity of it he would become so drunk and helpless that a stranger would believe he was dead and would never wake again. At the few wakes that came under my notice, the Mexicans were very orderly and showed every mark of respect to the dead. I believe there were no pipes or tobacco at those wakes, or if there were any they escaped my notice. At San Francisco, California, the Chinese put food on their burial plots for their dead, but the "hoboes" visiting that city steal the food and eat it as often as they can get at it.



The most notable bellman at the end of the last century was Markim. He was succeeded by Michael O'Sullivan.

*Blind Fiddlers and Flute Players.*—The custom of blind fiddlers and flute players, accompanied by members of their families, going on a quarterly circuit among the villages has now fallen into disuse. Formerly, when one of them entered the village he would be entertained, given two or three nights' lodging and a collection started for him. The boys and girls of the surrounding villages would assemble and these would be dancing until cock-crow in the morning.

*Boats and Canoes Haunted and Made Useless.*—A great trick to make a boat or canoe useless was to pretend to see it on sea with some mysterious persons in it, and that on approaching the boat or canoe for the purpose of speaking to its occupants, they disappeared suddenly as if the "earth, sky or sea swallowed them." If the crew were at home and not fishing that night, and the tale was told by a respectable person or corroborated by one who was not a notorious liar no person would venture into the boat or canoe forever after.

One-third of these visions were imaginary; two-thirds were founded by jealous neighbors and malicious persons who saw themselves outstripped by the success of some local families or crew as fishermen, consequently this superstition more rapidly died out.

*Bodach.*—This is represented by parents to children as the figure of an old beggar-man, at night looking through windows and making horrible faces against panes of glass, carrying a big sack and prepared to take with him children who he might find crying with-



out cause or wandering out into undesirable places in the dark.

Children ought to be told the truth, namely, that faces made against the windows are done by members of the family in order to frighten them. These false impressions created in the minds of innocent children at such an early age make their lives so miserable to them in after years that they imagine every bush that shakes after dark is a ghost or a fairy.

*Bone Fires.*—The custom of lighting bone fires on St. John's Eve is very much on the decline in this peninsula. In Castle Gregory boys and girls used to remain awake all night, dancing around them for amusement. Bone fire is said to be derived from the Canduaoin "baun fire," a beacon fire. A bone fire might mean a fire of bones, a fire of corpse, a funeral pile or a fire for destroying heretics, but whatever be the origin of it, one thing is certain, that bone fires existed long before the dawn of Christianity.

*Bone Setters.*—These were persons who made it a practice to set broken bones, but the dispensary doctor quickly sent them out of business.

*Brack-an-Tobar.*—All the holy wells in the country are supposed to have enchanted fish which never grew larger or smaller, and some believed that water containing the fish, if taken from the well, would never heat nor boil until both water and fish were returned. People of the present day treat this as a fish story.

*Brandon Mountain's Western Slope Held Sacred.*—For a long time the inhabitants treated the western slopes of Brandon Mountain so sacred through reverence for St. Brandon and his monks as not to allow

any living animal to be killed thereon except fish caught in the rivulets of Feoghanagh and Shaunakyle and given to the poor or taken by them as charity. The fish taken from these streams had to be eaten at once and could not be kept beyond the second night without eating. Birds within that sacred ground were nearly tame and hares when pursued by the hounds following in their tracks, as soon as the hares crossed the River of Feoghanagh, the hounds were stopped by the hunters. Cattle, wild deer, boars and all like animals therein were protected. I believe "Park Garrive" was about the last place here wherein hunting was strictly forbidden.

*Brendon (Saint) Feast.*—This was held on the 22nd of March, but from time immemorial is gone out of practice.

St. Brendon died on the 16th of May.

*Changlings.*—Fairies at one time were supposed to steal or spirit away a fine, rosy-cheeked, healthy-looking child or young person and take him off to Teernaoge, leaving a very thin, pale-faced, silent weakling instead of the person stolen behind them who in the dead of night changed into a withered crone. Medical science has proved this change to be done by consumption and other like causes, therefore the fairy thief is disappearing here faster than in other countries.

*Charms.*—Not very long since, "respectable" people went to "wise" old women to seek foolish cures for sickness by means of charms. I believe I heard about one hundred diseases mentioned, each of which I was told could be cured by a charm—consumption and the "fallen" sickness were amongst them. Men also pretended to heal horses and cattle by charms.

One of the most pitiable cases to come under my notice was at Cloushguire, Castle Gregory, where an old man at a very early hour of the morning was carrying on his performance over an old horse. It surprised me to find in such an enlightened place as Castle Gregory any person guilty of such folly as to believe in curing ailments by charms. Corkaguiny in general, I believe, stands as clean from superstition and charms as any barony in the British Isles, judging by the latter actions in foreign lands. The ignorance and superstitions of the few now amongst us are all nearly melted away before the bright rays of science and education.

*Contracts with the Devil.*—Some time ago quite a few were to be found who believed that noted card players had attained the art of winning as a result of a contract made by them with the devil, which contract was confirmed at a general meeting of the witches and ghosts over which the devil himself presided and the persons signed the articles of agreement with their own blood. To obtain possession of the soul was the main object of the devil. For a wise spirit like "Old Nick," he used to sometimes make very silly contracts. Then they thought of sleight-of-hand and other tricks. When the country became properly policed, the robbers and thieves, with the ghosts and devils, disappeared.

In England persons were hanged for selling their souls to the devil, and by virtue of the contract raised storms.

*Cross Thursday, or La croista na blianna.*—In olden times people would not like to start doing anything on Cross Thursday, especially the grandmothers of

the present age. Carding, spinning, etc., were sure to be suspended. Ask them why suspend spinning, etc., on that day, and they would only tell you that it was not for them to break an old custom which was accompanied by an old saying that if anything was started on Cross Thursday it would never be completed.

I believe that this day must have been observed at some time as a holiday in Ireland. No doubt but it had a religious origin connecting it with the order given by Herod the Great to murder the children of Bethlehem and its coast in order to cut off Jesus, who was born about the same time. Jesus escaped by being taken by His mother into Egypt.

This day is also known as Innocents' Day.

*Death Warning.*—The following were considered as sure warnings of impending death if any of them were seen or heard by a relative, namely: Dogs barking at the moon or the ghosts of the living; headless coach approaching; weeping of women; the Banshee's wail; sounds of a carpenter's hammer making a coffin; funeral processions; spots of blood on the floor, ground or roadway.

Of course, there were several others, but the above were most commonly mentioned.

*Easter Sunday Sun Dance on Easter Sunday Morning.*—That the sun can be seen dancing in the heavens on Easter Sunday morning is a widespread superstition, more or less all around the whole globe.

It is quite true that almost every Easter Sunday morning in our parts we have fine, bright sunshine, but this is due to the fact that at that season of the year everything in the ground is springing out fresh and green, and the warm heat of summer is approaching. When I was a little boy of about nine or ten years of age, I was often told that if I got up very early on Easter Sunday morning, I would see the sun dancing with a lamb, a cross, and a bird on its face. I did so, but of course I was disappointed. I dare say that many of those who were telling me then that I could see the sun dance on Easter Sunday thought Lent so dreary and long that they wished to see the Easter Sunday morning sun so that they could be at liberty to dance. Eggs are eaten in no small quantities on this morning.

On Easter Sunday dancing on the old crossroads called "Coughlanes" started. However, if one immoral case or any immodest transaction occurred in a parish, it often happened that dances and dancing schools in the entire district were wholly suppressed by the word of the parish priest and the dancing master turned away.

Sun dancing on Easter Sunday may be traced back to a heathen custom when the spectators themselves danced at a festival in honor of the sun after the vernal equinox.

*Eastern, Protestant and Catholic Winds.*—A member of the Protestant Episcopal religion came under

my notice who made it a practice to remain out on the night of the 31st of December until New Year's morning that he might see with his own eyes if the wind was favorable to the Protestants. If at midnight it blew from the east, it would indicate to him that the Protestants would be very prosperous that year, but if it blew from any other direction he would become restless and uneasy. Should it happen to blow from the west, he would express such words as "God help us poor Protestants; everything is going against us and in the way of the Roman Catholics this year." I have no doubt but some Catholics might then be found possessed of a like superstition.

*Fallen Angels.*—These were supposed to be in the air, in the house, and everywhere, and had the power "of good and evil." They could use a bush for a horse and ride all over the country. As they were considered pretty active gentlemen by night for hurling persons, standing in their way was not always safe. If they gave you a blow of their hurley on the head, you would not know what happened to you. Physicians now have found a cure for nearly all diseases, consequently such ignorance quickly disappeared.

*Funeral Bells.*—The custom of tolling bells slowly and solemnly three times for funerals is carried on in Dingle both in the Catholic and Protestant churches.\* The ringing of a hand bell through the streets of

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\*The custom of hanging bells to horses, cattle, sheep and goats is very common in the Republic of Old Mexico, also in the States of Nevada and California in the United States. Without those bells goats, sheep and cattle could not be located amongst the thick brush.

Dingle to summon the people to mass is many years gone out of practice.

*Gates of Glory.*—These are Gallauns standing at Milltown, Dingle. Probably they were first erected as landmarks. At a later period they served another purpose. Persons amenable to the town court for certain acts, such as debts and the like, were considered outside its jurisdiction when beyond those stones or landmarks. I was told that it often happened orders were obtained against deceased persons who owed money and the body arrested and held without burial up to, but not exceeding, nine days, unless some friend paid the debt. However, if the corpse escaped beyond the “Gates of Glory” the court was unable to follow it and those in the funeral could stone the bailiff. Consequently those stones were designated the Gates of Glory.

*Ghosts’ Spirits Cannot Cross Running Water.*—The reasons for persons believing that a ghost or a fairy will not follow them through any river or stream which is not bridged over or has no stepping stones is because when they with fear suddenly plunge into a deep hole in a river the cold water gives the nerves such a shock that it drives away all terror. If a man was hounded by an enemy and believed his life was in danger, he would quickly forget the ghosts and even hide in a graveyard if he thought that by so doing he would escape from his pursuer.

*Glas-Guineach.*—This cow was remarkable for giving a large quantity of milk. She belonged to the monks then residing at Kilmalckedor, was well fed



and grazed upon the best patches of sweet pasture in the district. A thief attempted to steal her, but was captured in the act. To make an example of him, his finger prints and the impression of the cow's hoofs for future reference and to warn the people of the district to be aware of him were cut or set into the stones by some natural art touching finger prints then known to those monks. The stories of the Glas-Guinach are numerous and interesting. Children inclined to steal were reminded of what happened to the thief who stole the monk's cow.

*Gospels.*—These are received from a priest, sewn into a piece of cloth, worn on necks of some children.

*Haunted Houses.*—Three houses in the whole barony of Corkaguiny are all I can discover to have the reputation of being haunted now. Thieves, robbers and persons of fraudulent and dishonest intentions manufactured ghosts and imposed them on their innocent neighbors as haunting certain places, while in other cases where an unnatural death took place, such as murder, suicide or the like, a fear would sieze the person finding the corpse or one hearing about it. Children seeing white boys assembled by night in open places and not knowing who they were prolonged the belief in the ghosts and fairies.

*Headless Coach Stories.*—These are wicked lies which were told on winter nights at the firesides by old people and imposed upon children as real truth. To make it more serious, the storyteller would put on a long, solemn face and speak in whispers. He would start and describe in detail the make, appearance and movements of the headless coach, thereby terrorizing the very lives in us children, so much



so that we would not willingly come home after dark unless accompanied by another. There never was such a thing as a headless coach in our parts, and some old people there are guilty of a very serious crime in poisoning and destroying the minds of young children with such horrid tales.

*Hold Out the Hand and Split the Difference.*—In selling or buying horses, cattle, sheep and hogs at fairs and markets a peculiar custom prevails. When the buyer and seller are within a few shillings of a bargain a friendly neighbor asks them to “split the difference” and places their hands together. Another habit is for a buyer, when making an offer which he expects will be accepted by the seller, to ask the seller to open his hand. This being done, he slaps the open hand in token of an agreement as he makes what he pretends to be his last bid.

*Holy Water Bottles in Canoes.*—There is a custom among fishermen to the west of Dingle of carrying very small bottles containing holy water tightly corked and fastened by a strong string to their canoes when going to sea.

*Holy Wells* (See “His. Co. Kerry”—Corkaguiny). Pilgrims to holy wells leave rags, copper coins and other quite valueless tokens behind them in paying rounds, at Brandon Mountain shrine and other like places.

*Horn Dance.*—This peculiar dance was introduced into these parts by persons of foreign descent in gentlemen’s houses, and it disappeared with them. In dancing, they wore horns and had bells on their feet.

*Horseshoe Nailed Over the Door.*—This class of superstition I find more common in the United States

of America than elsewhere. Of course, it is brought by Europeans into the country, chiefly by Jews.

*Hurley*.—In former times this was considered a very fine play in those parts but now is altogether extinct. Two men courting the same girl often challenged each other to a hurling match in front of the girl, and the man successful claimed her affection.

*I Usga Bagha, i. e., the Water of Life*.—This was the name applied to whisky. A custom of hanging a bush, a jug and a glass in front of a house having spirits for sale, and such notices as refreshments for man and beast, disappeared with the enforcement of the license laws and were replaced by the show card.

*Judges Bringing Bad Weather to Kerry*.—Many persons believe that the judges of the assizes in their circuit bring with them bad weather to the County of Kerry, due to so many false oaths being sworn before them and therefore so much wrong done in the name of justice. Consequently, apart from any other reason, their lordships are considered very undesirable visitors to the county by most of the people outside of the legal profession. It is quite true that at nearly all times in the last century when the assizes were held in Tralee it was either raining or the sky was dark and gloomy and the weather bad. This probably was due to the season of the year in which the assizes were usually held. However, more noticeable was the weather on the mornings of the executions in Tralee Jail of persons condemned to death by judges and packed juries, but innocent in the minds of the people.

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\*Whisky is the water of death to every person. The saloonkeeper, or publican, who gives drink to a child or young girl under the age of 21 years is the devil's best agent on earth.

*Lady Day.*—This was the patron day of Dingle. It was held on the 8th of September.

*Leprachawn.*—This is the name given to a shoemaker appearing in several fairy tales. He is supposed to be a very rich little gentleman and a native of Teer-Na-Oge, who appears very often amongst briers, bushes and boulders. He is not more than six inches in height, is often dressed in a nice green coat ornamented with gold and silver lace, wears knee breeches and a red cap. They tell me he works very hard at mending shoes. His shelves are covered with stacks of gold coin, and in addition he has many crocks of this precious metal. While he is working it is very easy to steal upon him and catch him. I am told that whenever you lay your hands upon him you should sieze him quickly and, although his shrill screams will be heart-rending, do not loosen your hold, and at the same time you must not take your eyes off the gold, for if you do he will surely change it into brown leaves and pay you off with a half-sovereign. I fear that most of those who saw the Leprachawn were paid off with brown leaves. If a remarkably poor person became suddenly rich, and was anxious to keep his neighbors in the dark as to the source of his changed position, he was sure to tell them that he captured a Leprachawn.

*Lycanthropy.*—Here is another wicked superstition, viz., that persons in league with the devil can assume other forms, such as a dog, etc. I am very glad I cannot now find one person to credit such tales.

*Marriages and Weddings.*—Many of the peculiar customs attached to marriages and wedding feasts are slowly but surely changing for the better. Imitations

of the false standards of "decency" set up by the middlemen of the previous centuries are fast disappearing. However, the people, both in town and country, are still too extravagant with their marriages and weddings, and in some instances the marriage fees are unreasonably excessive when compared with the offering made for a like ceremony in other countries. Rare cases of this kind unfortunately rob the marriage of its sacramental appearance and bring it to the level of a civil contract. The practice of making a collection amongst the parties attending a wedding feast and offering it to the curate and clerk is now almost out of fashion.

*May Day.*—The superstitions connected with May Day were numerous and widespread. That day people watched their cattle. Bad women with their wooden milk gallons placed under their aprons watched for an opportunity to steal upon their neighbors' cows to milk them. Witches were believed to go about as hares. These superstitions, I am glad to say, are now very rare.

*Mistletoe.*—Kissing under the mistletoe was a custom which is now almost dead and gone, at least in West Kerry. In our part of the county it was a very innocent amusement, and I never heard of a single instance in which it was abused. The custom was this: At Christmas a piece of mistletoe was hung up over the doorway leading into the kitchen or some other favorable place, and whenever a young girl stood under it a young man claimed—and nearly always exercised—a right to kiss the girl and pluck off a berry for each kiss. Sometimes in the town of Dingle two or three young men would stand on a street corner

having a piece of mistletoe with them and would kiss every girl that happened to come their way. A girl who would make persons believe that she was running away trying to avoid being kissed by the boys was sure to be hunted until caught; then the mistletoe would be held over her head until she was given at least a half-dozen kisses by each of her captors.

Although it is the relic of pagan days, the mistletoe was hung up in churches during Christmas, but because young people, instead of praying and assisting properly at mass, were kissing, courting and rehearsing the marriage ceremony over eligibles, thereby causing the whole congregation to pass from one uproar of laughter into another, both the mistletoe and the kisses were abolished, and the holly, with its numerous thorns, substituted for the mistletoe, thereby warning them of the fact that going through marriage was like drawing them through a thicket of holly and briars, the thorns of which might pierce them to the quick.

*Mother Carey's Chickens or Stormy Petrels.*—This was the term applied to flocks of small web-footed birds about the size of a chicken or even smaller than blackbirds. Their appearance is neat and they are always on the wing. They are found pretty numerous at times in the Basket Islands and Skellig Rocks, but their whole time is spent on the ocean. The reason they are called "Mother Carey's Chickens" is because fishermen and local sailors say they are the first and most reliable birds to give sailors warning of the approach of a storm by rushing in flocks towards them whistling "Wee, wee!" But I do not know how correct that can be, for I find that their greatest delight is in

rough weather and storms. The meaning of the expression, "Mother Carey," is said to be "Mother Dear," and is intended for the Virgin Mary, due to the fact that she was considered the patroness of sailors.

In the daytime these birds never seem to swim, but while on the wing allow their feet to touch the water, and naturalists say from its walking appearance upon the waves like the Apostle Peter, the name "Petrel" was applied to them.

Whenever superstitious sailors of other countries see a flock of these merry sea birds following their ship, they try to kill them, owing to the birds' delight in storms. They believe bad luck follows their trail, that they cause storms, and they call them the "devil's birds," but the truth is that as they don't appear to dive like other sea birds they more easily pick up their food from the surge than in calm water. (See my "History of the Skellig and Blasket Islands for an account of these birds.)

*Mug.*—The large wooden mug, cups and gallons are now out of use. However, a few can still be found in country homes.

*Mugs.*—A name given to a party of striplings who went around first kissing the pretty girls and making mouths at the coarse and older ones. In course of time, rough and ignorant characters joined in and became such a nuisance that the girls protested against them and called them "Mugs," no doubt after the Muns of England, who carried on much the same practice with the breaking of windows, wrenching of knockers added. The latter too was extended to those parts by the rowdy element.

*Pagan Wells, Lises and Fairy Tales.*—Lises are found everywhere in the barony. They were erected within view of each other, so that in event of an attack on one lis or a fort a fire kept burning would be extinguished as an alarm signal. These forts are surrounded by the best quality of land in their immediate vicinity. Fairy tales are connected with every one of them. Some people frightened the lives in little children with fairy tales and ghost stories. Those stories had this much of a foundation in our locality: In the beginning of the Eighteenth Century when the British law prohibited the exportation or sale of wool to any other country but to themselves, farmers became engaged in smuggling wool to France, where they received as high as two shilling, sixpence (sixty cents) a pound from France. Cutters brought wines and brandies with them, which were often hidden in specially prepared chambers in forts, lises and cahirs, near the sea coast. To keep children away so as not to give information, they told them that the men seen in those forts and lises were fairies. This helped to prolong the life of the old tales. Every cave to the west of Dingle was filled with wool, trying to smuggle it to a convenient place for loading it into ships. The French pretended they were carrying from Ireland emigrants called the "Wild Geese," i. e., Catholics who were forbidden by law to live in Ireland. The magistrates who were supposed to stop it were engaged in this illicit trade. Amongst the most objectionable was their description of the headless coach leaving a burial ground going in the direction of some dying person and returning with its victim. the Banshee's lonely wail, the appearance of a golden-haired



woman courting with fairy pleasure some fine young man trying to take him into fairyland. However, worse still were their representations of dances at the ancient crossroads by young men and maidens years in their graves, long funeral processions of the dead at night through certain roads in which a living companion of the dead would pretend to see and recognize some of his dead neighbors and at the same time he would order those in his company who could see nothing wrong to step aside and let the dead pass.

The least objectionable fables are the mermaids and their enchanted capes and the enchanted music of the dead, how St. Patrick tricked the snakes and serpents, the appearance of strange and mysterious ships at sea leading sailors and fishermen to their doom, the Broack-an-rubber, Feon Macoal, Diamond and Grana, chieftains clad in white armor riding on horses shod with gold shoes galloping through the country every May morning and serpents in lake.

Pagan wells, too, were deemed sacred because old Druids washed and dressed the wounds of soldiers and persons injured in them.

*Patron Days.*—These are held where Christian churches were erected, consecrated and dedicated to that particular saint whose festival falls on or about the day on which the patron is held. It was so very hard to overthrow pagan celebrations, which continued

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\*It is strange that the whole of the great Northwestern States of America, by the vote of the people, made their States completely dry, and that without compensation to the saloonkeeper, yet our people, amongst whom it has such a ruinous effect, cannot hold a Christian patron day without traffic in intoxicating liquors. In the United States a minor dare not enter a saloon, and a saloonkeeper is debarred from entering almost all lodges—even many Christian churches have refused to accept their money; yet in our parts a publican will be elected a district and county councillor before most other persons in the neighborhood.

for a long time after the dawn of Christianity in Ireland, the clergy, and wise Christians, too, admonished the people to abandon the custom of attending pagan meetings in mountains and other like places and started sports on patron days close to their churches, and in this manner completely exterminated the adoration of idols.

In the middle of the last century, excessive drinking and an occasional street fight tended to degrade them. Long ago they served their purpose and at present no objection could be held against them if they were held completely dry.\*

*Penitent Pilgrims of the Cat-Brack.*—Catholics attending Protestant Bible classes, reading their literature or listening to a funeral service during the fearful religious quarrels of what is known as the "Souper campaign," as a part of their penance had to go from Dingle to Killarney, a distance of over forty miles. Some very old men did the journey on foot. Amongst the reasons for taking exception to a funeral service was that Protestant writers, in boasting of the success of their mission, classed Roman Catholics standing around the coffin while the funeral service was read at the graveside as "converts" to Protestantism. The result was that Catholics attending the funeral of a Protestant neighbor or relative would accompany the corpse no further than the gate to the graveyard or burial ground or keep a reasonable distance away until the religious services were ended.

*Racing at Weddings.*—The custom of men riding saddle horses, racing with each other to see who would be the first to reach the newly married girl to bring

her home to the wedding, is now almost dead and gone, but the spirit survives.

*Red Lighted Coals of Fire Given Out of the House.* Old women in country villages prevented fire to be given out of their houses, and insisted on all men smoking extinguishing all the fire in their pipes before leaving the house was, I believe, the most ignorant superstition I ever saw practiced. A farmer's wife feared that if you should carry a lighted pipe from their house into another, it would enable the person carrying same to transfer milk and butter from one farmer to another, and he could do many other things.

*Rounds.*—Paying rounds around holy wells and shrines are very much on the decline.

*Shea-Hated by the Mermaids of the Sea.*—It is almost impossible for persons bearing the name of Shea or O'Shea to obtain partners to join them fishing in any harbor in the barony, due to the fact that people are afraid that if they had an O'Shea or Shea in their boats or canoes they would be drowned. For this belief a thousand reasons are sometimes given. However, after setting aside tales appertaining to mermaids, spirits of the deep, legends and superstitions, the striking fact remains that of the names of persons drowned in this peninsula within the last century the surname of Shea or O'Shea outstrip all others, and this is the more remarkable when taken into consideration that through fear in storms very few of them will take the risks of their fellow fishermen. Possibly when caught in sea trouble the want of confidence arising from superstition may have something to do with it.

*Snap Apple Nights, or All Hallow Eve.*—This night falls on the 31st of October. Up until near the end of the last century, it was a night of sport by young people in those parts by trying to extract fun and prophecy from fruit and beans. Amongst other things, they place beans together in pairs in the ashes close to the heat of the fire for the supposed lovers, one named for the boy and the other for the girl. If the beans burn brightly and quietly together, it indicated that the young man and the young girl so indicated would be married, but if they cracked and jumped apart from each other they would never be married. From the ashes many a strange tale would be foretold. After one pair jumped apart, another pair of beans would be tried and some other likely lovers named for each.

Young persons also would dip for apples in tubs of water and endeavor to bring one up in the mouth by pressing it against the bottom of the tub. Sometimes an apple would hang from a cord and they would try to catch it with their mouths while in circular motion. In catching apples, hands should not be used.

I knew of one girl who privately melted lead several times and each time threw it into water, in hopes that she could foresee her future husband to be a ploughman possessing horses, cattle and ploughs. I know that she got married to a farmer, not because the lead and water conveyed anything of the kind, but her heart and mind was set on having a farmer as her husband.

This is a superstitious practice handed down to us from the Druids. Formerly these things were a ceremony of belief, but with few execeptions in our parts this superstitious belief has disappeared and now

they have become things of pure sport. Other nationalities in Europe are still found quite superstitious about All Hallow Eve.

*Steel-Pen Coats.*—These steel-pen frize woolen coats and knee-breeches ornamented with brass buttons and commonly worn up toward the last quarter of the last century are now nearly extinct in those parts.

*St. Martin's Eve.*—It appears that St. Martin was buried on the 11th of November. In some country homes amongst farmers I noticed that on St. Martin's Eve some animal was killed, such as a goose, a duck, a hen or a cock, and that the outside threshold of the door was sprinkled with the blood of the animal killed for St. Martin. Some went as far as to sprinkle the four corners of their dwelling houses with blood. I believe this had a Christian charitable origin and in the course of age lost its true meaning and character. Whether Christian or pagan, it is a very curious custom, and I see no good in it for the present age.

*St. Patrick and the Snakes.*—Are there any snakes to be found in Ireland? Did St. Patrick banish them? These are questions which Americans ask me daily. My answer to the first question is that I never saw nor heard of any snake living in Ireland since the days of St. Patrick. Ireland does not produce any venomous reptile. The following are *not* to be found there, viz., snakes, tortoises, scorpions or dragons. Leeches, lizards and frogs are numerous, but these are harmless. I am told that snakes brought over to Ireland will die or lose their venom before they land. Sailors who say they have tried it tell me that as they were drawing near the land the snakes died. Circuses will not attempt to cross the Irish Sea from England with

their snakes for fear of losing them. People living in Ireland never saw a snake. The reasons given by some naturalists for snakes not living in Ireland are not identical.

Now, with regard to St. Patrick banishing the snakes and all other poisonous reptiles out of Ireland, both tradition and legend says he did it but it is not supported by historical documents. According to ancient writings, snakes were found in Ireland before the Christian era. There is full and clear evidence that some of the people adored idols made into the imitation of snakes, and also dead snakes, and that these were collected and delivered up by newly converted Christians to St. Patrick and with their full accord the idols were destroyed by him and thrown into a lake. Beyond that I cannot go, and I regret to say here I must leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

The very early Catholic Church historians in Ireland did not mention a word about St. Patrick's connection with the snakes. St. Patrick left behind him a written document called his "Confession," and in this there is no mention of the snakes. However, many years after his death—some centuries—Irish historians stated clearly that it was St. Patrick who banished the snakes. English historians up to the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries agreed with the Irish historians of that period, and, for the reason that snakes would live in the Isle of Man, they (the English) classified that island as more properly belonging to England.

If St. Patrick had nothing to do with the live snakes—and I suppose he had not—there must be something very strange in the air or soil of Ireland.

It is more remarkable still when we consider that if snakes which live in the British Isles will die on their arrival in Ireland, and many of them, it is said, before they ever touch the Irish soil, and that science so far has not discovered any means to overcome it. It is also said that if pure Irish earth was scattered in a garden snakes would become scarce.

*St. Stephen's Day.*—As everybody knows, this day falls on the 26th of December. A peculiar custom connected with this day still lingers in those parts. Men dressed in straw or like women, wearing masks with face blackened, carrying flags, a bush with a wren fastened to it, and having a fife and drum band playing about them, parade the streets. They dance and make merriment and are always followed by a big crowd. One of the company carries a white hobbyhorse, which is an imitation of a horse made of wood and covered with white calico. Under the hobbyhorse the party are supposed to have one of their best dancers. The under jaw of the hobbyhorse is to work with a string so that it cracks in time with his step and also the steps of all the dancers. This part of the program is not easily done and therefore is often neglected. After dancing a little, they change the performance and the hobbyhorse, carrying a ladle in its mouth, is sent around to collect contributions while a purser enters the horse beating every person with bladders tied onto the end of a stick.

It appears these sports originated at the Feast of Fools in the Christian churches and monasteries of other countries from whom we borrowed them. St. Stephen's Day was specially set aside for deacons and other orders of the clergy who were not able to enjoy



Christmas owing to the extra religious labors cast upon them.

Coupled with this came the mistletoe, and, to act in the plays, laymen, too, were admitted. Whenever it was necessary to raise funds for the repair of some church dances were performed in the churchyard on Sundays. The surplus of the funds, after paying for the repair of the church, went to the support of the poor. In the course of ages abuses set in and now the performers have the proceeds themselves.

*Sunburst of Erin.*—In pagan days most of the Irish people looked towards the east for the rising sun and adored it. The most ancient flag of our country known was, I believe, a sky-blue field with a sunburst. In a field belonging to Mr. P. Lynch is a large stone bearing an ancient sunburst emblem upon it. (For Ogham's inscribed stones, see History County Kerry.)

*Toothache Cure.*—The cure given by some old women for toothache was to have the sufferer in person enter a churchyard burial ground, find a dead man's finger or coffin nail and place it in his mouth, pressing the tooth several times into it. This practice was long ago abandoned.

*Witches (Witch Hare).*—When I was a little boy I found a few old women possessed of a horrid superstitious belief to the effect that an old witch (a woman) could change herself into a hare, and as such would go about lises, forts and like haunted places and therefrom enter fields and milk cows dry.\*

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\*On one occasion on a very fine summer's morning in a lis about a mile away from the village, I happened to see a hare eating grass, and I tried to chase it, but as the hare was too swift for me and I had nothing better than pebbles to throw at it, of course it escaped at ease. In great haste I returned to the village and took with me a young shepherd dog which belonged to one of the neighbors and which was in the habit of following me. However, when I reached the lis



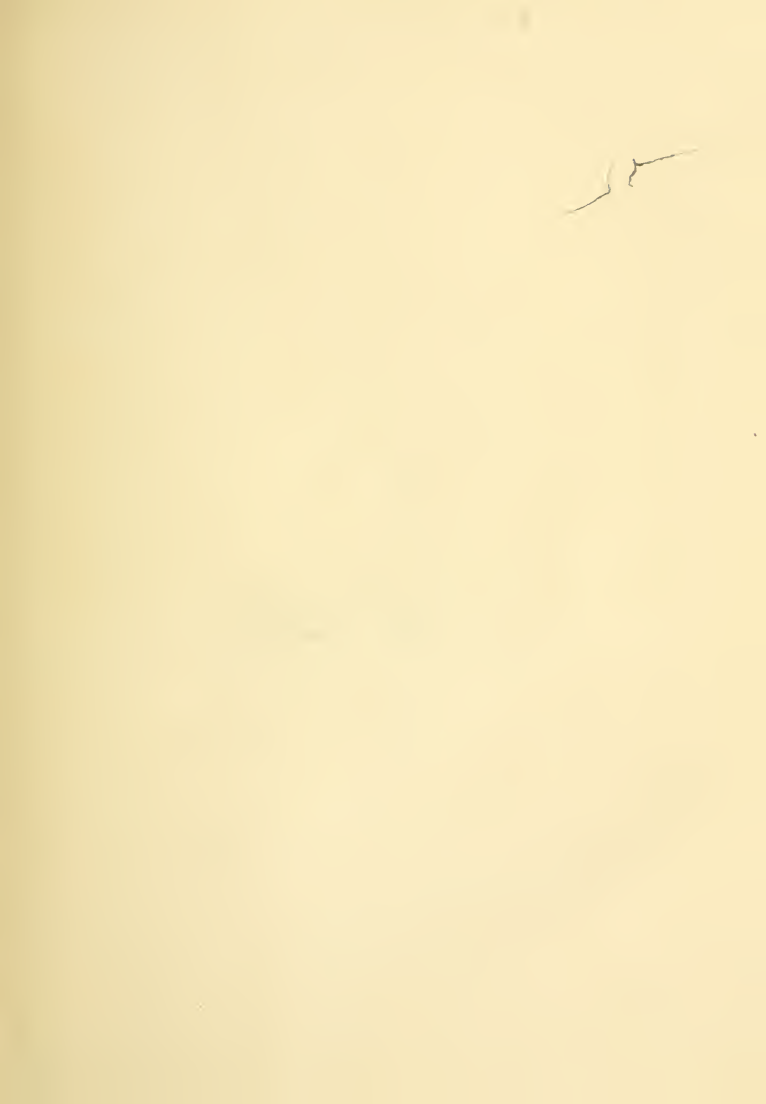
## TRADITIONS OF IRELAND

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there was no trace of my hare to be found and I felt very disappointed, especially when the dog would not go and find him for me. I came home and there I asked them to assist me to hunt for the hare, but they only laughed at me and told me that long ago the hare was gone to the mountain, and to catch a hare I should have a greyhound instead of a shepherd puppy. After nightfall I wandered into one of the neighbor's houses and joined other boys who were listening to some fairy tales. Here I was cross-examined as to the cause of my excitement and had to account for the nature of the mischief I was engaged in that I wanted the dog so early in the morning. I told them about my experience with the hare in the lls, but, while the whole house enjoyed my hunt, there was one in the company who took a more serious view of it. I was told that in all probability it was no hare but a witch, and if I escaped from injury I ought to consider myself lucky.

Next a hot argument arose between two as to the location of a lls where it was alleged an old witch changed herself into a hare and while running from the hounds towards an old cabin, just in the act of leaping through a very narrow window opening into the cabin, she was bitten and disappeared. The cabin was surrounded by the hounds and hunters and two went in to hunt her out, and although they searched every corner of the cabin, from the thatch to the floor, all they could find in the house was an old woman sitting on a mat of straw. Believing that this old woman must have killed the hare, they compelled her to stand up and found a lot of blood. The farmer called upon the witch and warned her never again to milk his cows or her life would be ended.

In England, thirty thousand persons were hanged for being witches and the Puritan fathers of New England, amongst many other wicked deeds of theirs connected with witchcraft, executed a woman for being a fox. I fail to understand how any people guilty of shedding so much innocent blood, which our Pilgrim fathers used as divine perfume in witchcraft, cases of which Boston and Salem furnish such an example, could be found to possess a pure religion.







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